



## **PRIME MINISTER**

### **STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP**

#### **AUSTRALIAN INITIATIVE FOR A NUCLEAR WEAPONS-FREE WORLD**

I am pleased to announce the formation of the Canberra Commission on the Elimination of Nuclear Weapons. I foreshadowed the Commission's establishment in my 24 October 1995 address on Australia and a world without nuclear weapons.

The Commission comprises eminent and outstanding individuals from around the world - statesmen, scientists, disarmament experts and military strategists - with extensive knowledge and experience of the subject matter. They are uniquely placed to bring fresh and imaginative thinking to this important task. A list of the Commission's members is attached.

The Commission will propose practical steps towards a nuclear weapons-free world including the related problem of maintaining stability and security during the transitional period and after this goal is accomplished.

During the current session of the United Nations General Assembly a number of resolutions have been adopted on nuclear matters which reaffirm broad international support for progress towards our shared goal of the cessation of nuclear testing and the continuation of the process of nuclear disarmament leading to the ultimate objective of the complete elimination of nuclear weapons.

The adoption of these resolutions is consistent with the commitment made by 178 nations, including the five nuclear weapons states, in May this year to the indefinite extension of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), article VI of which commits these nations to pursue measures towards complete disarmament.

The Canberra Commission and its work will be a major contribution to that shared goal.

Some years ago a Commission of this type would have been a theoretical exercise. But the end of the Cold War means that we can seriously envisage a concrete program to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons. Current and planned reductions in nuclear arsenals, the unanimous decision to extend the NPT, the commitment of the international community to conclude a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty in 1996 and the international outcry against continued nuclear testing all show that the time is right to take a fresh look at concepts of security and the role of nuclear weapons.

The Commission's wide-ranging mandate will enable it to deal with the many complex issues that need to be taken into account. These include the importance of political motivation and incentive in strengthening non-proliferation norms and moving to a nuclear weapons-free world, the role of the nuclear weapon states and threshold states, steps to strengthen international instruments and control mechanisms, verification arrangements, global and regional security in the transitional period to a nuclear weapons-free world, and dealing with possible breaches of commitments - often called 'break out' - nuclear theft and terrorism.

The Commission will meet three or four times beginning early in the new year in Australia. Its report will be presented to me by 31 August 1996. The Government intends to submit the report of the Commission to the 1996 United Nations General Assembly and to the Conference on Disarmament as a major contribution to nuclear disarmament initiatives emanating from these bodies.

We should be under no illusions about the difficulty of the task but the opportunity to develop a practical program leading to complete elimination of nuclear weapons must not be lost.

**CANBERRA**

**26 November 1995**

## CANBERRA COMMISSION ON THE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

### Ambassador Celso Amorim (Brazil)

Celso Amorim was Brazilian Foreign Minister from 1993–1994, and a former Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science and International Relations, University of Brasilia. He is currently Brazil's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York.

### General (ret.) George Lee Butler (United States)

Lee Butler was Commander in Chief of the US Strategic Air Command (1991–92) and subsequently the US Strategic Command (1992–94) with responsibility for all US Air Force and Navy nuclear deterrent forces. He was closely involved in the development of US nuclear doctrine. General Butler has served as a deputy to General Colin Powell.

### Ambassador Richard Butler (Australia) (Convenor)

Richard Butler was Australia's Ambassador for Disarmament from 1983–88 and is now Australia's Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York.

### Field Marshal the Lord Carver (United Kingdom)

Michael Carver was Commander in Chief Far East of the British Army (1967–1969), Chief of General Staff (1971–1973), and Chief of Defence Staff (1973–1976). He is author of *A Policy for Peace* (1982), on nuclear policy, and numerous other works on military history.

### Ambassador Jayantha Dhanapala (Sri Lanka)

Jayantha Dhanapala chaired the 1995 Nuclear Non–Proliferation Treaty Review and Extension Conference and is a former Director of the UN Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR). He is a prominent figure in international nuclear non–proliferation and disarmament issues and is currently Sri Lanka's Ambassador to the United States.

### Ambassador Rolf Ekeus (Sweden)

Rolf Ekeus is Executive Chairman, United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM), whose mandate is to identify and eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction. He is a former Swedish Ambassador for Disarmament and Ambassador to the CSCE.

Ambassador Dr Nabil Elaraby (Egypt)

Nabil Elaraby is a specialist international lawyer and a member of the International Law Commission. He has been a key figure in nuclear non-proliferation matters for many years, and was formerly Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations, Geneva (1987-91). He is currently Permanent Representative of Egypt to the United Nations, New York.

Professor Ryukichi Imai (Japan)

Ryukichi Imai is a Counsellor to the Japan Atomic Power Company and a Professor at Kyorin University. He is a former Ambassador of Japan to the Conference on Disarmament (1982-87), to Kuwait and to Mexico. He has been a Distinguished Scholar and a member of the Board of the Institute for International Policy Studies founded by former Japanese Prime Minister Nakasone. Professor Imai is an author of numerous books and articles mainly on nuclear energy, non-proliferation and disarmament matters.

Datuk Dr Ronald S McCoy (Malaysia)

Ronnie McCoy is Vice President of Asia Pacific Region and Chairman of Malaysian Chapter of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War, which organisation won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1985. He is currently President of the Malaysian Medical Association.

Robert McNamara (United States)

Robert McNamara was Secretary of Defense under Presidents Kennedy and Johnson. He is a former President of the Ford Motor Company and the World Bank. Since leaving the World Bank he has been active in economic and development efforts across the globe and in the areas of arms control and nuclear non-proliferation.

Professor Robert O'Neill (Australia)

Robert O'Neill is Chichele Professor of the History of War, All Souls College, Oxford University and was formerly Director, International Institute of Strategic Studies, London.

Michel Rocard (France)

Michel Rocard was Prime Minister of France 1988-91. He is now a member of the European Parliament and the French Senate, and a member of the Foreign Affairs and Defence Commission in each.

*Professor Joseph Rotblat (United Kingdom)*

Winner of the 1995 Nobel Peace Prize, Joseph Rotblat is President of the Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs and a long standing activist and writer on nuclear disarmament. He worked on the atom bomb during World War II in Liverpool and Los Alamos and was a signatory of the Russell-Einstein Manifesto. He is Emeritus Professor at St Bartholomew's Hospital, University of London.

*Professor Roald Sagdeev (Russia)*

Roald Sagdeev is Distinguished Professor, Department of Physics, University of Maryland and Director of the East-West Space Science Centre. He has held the post of Director of the Space Research Institute of the USSR Academy of Sciences and was former President Gorbachev's science adviser. From 1987-1988 Professor Sagdeev was Chairman of the Committee of Soviet Scientists for Global Security.

*Dr Maj-Britt Theorin (Sweden)*

Maj-Britt Theorin is a Member of the European Parliament. She is a former Swedish Ambassador for Disarmament and President of the International Peace Bureau. She was Chairman of the UN Commission of Experts on Nuclear Weapons 1989-90.

**CANBERRA COMMISSION ON THE ELIMINATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS :**  
**PROPOSED MANDATE**

The Commission will develop ideas and proposals for a concrete and realistic program to achieve a world totally free of nuclear weapons. The proliferation of nuclear weapons is widely recognised as having become the most serious threat to global security, and member states of the United Nations and the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) have committed themselves to the objective of a world totally free of nuclear weapons. While various studies relevant to the achievement of such a world have been and are being conducted, there has been no attempt to develop a comprehensive and practical answer to the crucial question of how this objective can be achieved.

The practical steps towards a nuclear weapon free world, to be suggested by the Commission, will also address the related problem of maintaining stability and security during the transitional period and after the ultimate goal is accomplished.

The Commission will present a report to the Prime Minister of Australia by 31 August 1996. It is the Government of Australia's intention to submit the Commission's report to the 51st Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations and to the Conference on Disarmament.

The Commission will consider and develop recommendations on the following issues:

- Identification of concrete and realistic steps for achieving a nuclear weapons free world, including the development and establishment of necessary verification and control mechanisms and new international legal obligations. Possible areas of focus include:
  - the contribution of a Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty; Nuclear Weapon Free Zones; a 'Cut-Off' Convention on the cessation of production of fissile material for nuclear weapons; a possible treaty requiring all states to declare and account for their present stocks of fissile material; and the strengthening of the international safeguards system;
  - carrying through of the commitment by the nuclear weapon states to eliminate their nuclear stockpiles through a systematic process, including safe and secure arrangements for weapons dismantlement and destruction; and
  - the problem of nuclear threshold states and the related issue of achieving universal participation in the NPT.
- Development of durable security arrangements, both globally and regionally, including
  - the maintenance of a system of stable deterrence while the reduction and eventual elimination of nuclear weapons is being achieved;
  - the link with other weapons of mass destruction and their control or elimination; and
  - measures to prevent break-out, nuclear theft and nuclear terrorism/criminality.
- Other related issues the Commission may identify during its work.