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CHINESE REPRESENTATION IN THE UNITED NATIONS

Statement by the Prime Minister, Mr William McMahon

I welcome the statement by Mr Rogers, the US Secretary of State, that the United States will support action for seating the PRC in the United Nations and will oppose any action to expel the ROC or otherwise deprive it of representation. Likewise, I welcome the United States acceptance that the question of China's seat in the Security Council is one to be resolved by the members of the United Nations.

The announcement by Mr Rogers clearly reflects the close accord of the United States and Australian Governments on the China representation issue. Our position, as formulated over several months, has been that we would not oppose the representation of the PRC in the United Nations. Indeed, I have said that it was both inevitable and right that China should be a member of the UN General Assembly and should hold the permanent seat in the Security Council. At the same time, I have continued to emphasise that the Republic of China - Taiwan - should be given the chance to maintain its membership of the United Nations if it so wished. Only the United Nations can decide the question of Chinese representation. As one member of the United Nations, we will play our part in efforts to reach a decision that will be honourable and just.

The Australian Government has been in consultation with the United States and other friendly governments for several months on the question of Chinese representation in the United Nations. We were consulted in advance on the substance of the Secretary of State's announcement.

Of course, in a developing situation, many points of detail on the implementation of policy still need to be determined. We will remain in close consultation with the United States and other friendly governments in coming months about these details.

I hope that the forthcoming session of the General Assembly, and the scheduled visit of President Nixon to Peking, will help to usher in a new era of better relations between the People's Republic of China and the countries of the Asia/Pacific region.

CANBERRA,
3 August 1971