



PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS:

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STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR WILLIAM McMAHON

RELEASE OF SHEIKH MUJIBUR RAHMAN

We welcome the decision of the Government of Pakistan to release Sheikh Mujibur Rahman.

The Australian Government has sent several messages to the Government of Pakistan designed not only to ensure the safety and welfare of the Sheikh, but also to promote direct negotiations with Awami League leaders, including the Sheikh in particular.

This was done in the interests of promoting a settlement in the region which would lead to the return of the refugees and the restoration of normal conditions of life.

We hope that the return to Dacca today of Sheikh Mujibur will prove to be a significant step towards achieving these objectives as well as a stable political environment and Government administration.

CANBERRA

10 January 1971.