



PRIME MINISTER

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AUSTRALIA/JAPAN MINISTERIAL COMMITTEE

Statement by the Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. William McMahon, CH, MP.

The Prime Minister, the Rt Hon. William McMahon, announced today that the first meeting of the Australia /Japan Ministerial Committee would be held in Canberra on 12 and 13 October.

Mr McMahon recalled that the establishment of the Committee had been agreed when the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry, Mr J.D. Anthony, had visited Japan last year. The first meeting had been tentatively scheduled for earlier this year, but had been postponed because of the change of Government in Japan.

The Prime Minister said that the meeting would discuss the general setting in which the Committee was beginning its work and the broad directions in which bilateral relations between Australia and Japan were developing; international and national economic and financial issues; multilateral trade matters; bilateral trade; energy and natural resources; transportation matters; and Papua New Guinea matters.

The Japanese side, Mr McMahon said, would be led by the Foreign Minister, Mr Ohira, who would have with him Mr Nakasone, the Minister for International Trade and Industry, Mr Sasaki, the Minister for Transportation, Mr Adachi, the Minister for Agriculture and Forestry, and Mr Arita, the Director-General of the Economic Planning Agency. The five Japanese Ministers would be accompanied by their wives.

Mr McMahon said that the Australian Ministers involved in the meeting, which would be chaired by the Foreign Minister, Mr Bowen, would be the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Industry, Mr Anthony; the Treasurer, Mr Snedden; the Minister for Primary Industry, Mr Sinclair; the Minister for National Development, Sir Reginald Swartz; the Minister for Shipping and Transport, Mr Nixon; the Minister for Civil Aviation, Senator Cotton; and the Minister for External Territories, Mr Peacock, who would be supported by the Chief Minister of Papua New Guinea, Mr Somare, in the discussion of matters affecting Papua New Guinea.

In drawing attention to the significance which each side, by the strength of its representation, clearly attached to the meeting, the Prime Minister emphasised "the importance of the Ministerial Committee in developing further the economic, trade and commercial relationships between Australia and Japan to the advantage and satisfaction of both, and as part of the overall effort to strengthen the whole range of links between the two countries".

Mr McMahon said he was confident that the value of the initiative taken by the two governments in establishing the Committee would be demonstrated over the years by the work of the Committee. Important developments were afoot in the world economy, and Japan and Australia were each playing their full part in those developments. It was clearly of the first importance that the two countries, already closely linked in many ways, should continue to consult closely both in respect of their bilateral relations and of the many issues arising in multilateral forums. "The Ministerial Committee will play a principal part in ensuring this," Mr McMahon said.

Canberra
27 September 1972