



**DEPARTMENT OF
FOREIGN
AFFAIRS**

NO

DATE

M/93

7 June 1973

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO INDIA: JOINT COMMUNIQUE

The following is the text of the joint communique issued in New Delhi yesterday at the conclusion of the visit to India by the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr Whitlam:-

"At the invitation of Shrimati Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, His Excellency Mr Edward Gough Whitlam, Q.C., M.P., Prime Minister of Australia, visited India from 3 to 6 June, 1973. He was accompanied by Mrs Whitlam and senior officials of the Government of Australia.

During his stay in Delhi, the Prime Minister of Australia was received by the President of India.

The Prime Minister of Australia had extensive discussions with the Prime Minister of India. The Minister of External Affairs, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Agriculture, the Minister of Planning and the Minister of Commerce called on the Prime Minister of Australia and discussed matters of mutual interest. The talks were held in an atmosphere of friendship and mutual understanding and covered a wide range of subjects dealing with important international questions and bilateral relations. These discussions revealed a close similarity of views and approach between the Governments of Australia and India.

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The Prime Ministers of India and Australia welcomed the general relaxation of tension in the international situation. They felt that this detente presents opportunities for consolidating peace and freedom and for taking constructive steps towards social and economic progress in a climate of international co-operation. They expressed the hope that all remaining differences, particularly in the areas of conflict, would be resolved peacefully and in accordance with the principles of national sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-interference in the internal affairs of states, thereby ensuring harmony among nations and a stable pattern of international relations.

The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their faith in the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. They declared their intention to maintain active cooperation in the United Nations, particularly in the Security Council of which both countries are currently members.

The two Prime Ministers exchanged views on regional cooperation. They reaffirmed the importance attached by their respective Governments to increasing regional cooperation and the contribution that such cooperation can make to easing international tensions, to broadening understanding among nations and to the economic and social advancement of countries in the region. In this context, the Prime Ministers noted the important contribution made to objectives by such organisations as the Colombo Plan, the Economic Commission for Asia and the Far East and the Asian Development Bank. The support of both India and Australia for the Kuala Lumpur Declaration of 27 November, 1971, calling for a zone

of peace, freedom and neutrality in South-East Asia was reaffirmed.

Both the Prime Ministers welcomed the Paris Agreement of 27 January, 1973, on ending the War and Restoring Peace in Viet-Nam and the Agreement on Restoring Peace and Achieving National Concord in Laos signed in Vientiane on 21 February, 1973. The Prime Ministers underlined the need for strict observance of these agreements so as to open the way to peace in all the countries of Indo-China and to enable the peoples of those countries to settle their affairs themselves without outside interference. Both Prime Ministers reaffirmed their willingness to contribute to the rehabilitation and reconstruction of this region.

The Prime Minister of India outlined the recent developments in the sub-continent since the conclusion of the Simla Agreement, including the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Declaration of 17 April, 1973, as well as India's efforts for achieving a just and durable peace leading to good neighbourly relations and cooperation among all the states in the sub-continent. The Australian Prime Minister welcomed the Indo-Bangladesh Joint Declaration as a positive initiative and, while recognising the complexity of the issues involved, expressed the hope that further progress would soon be made which would lead to the normalisation of relations and the establishment of a durable peace in the sub-continent.

The two Prime Ministers expressed concern at the grave situation in the Middle-East and reaffirmed their belief that the United Nations Security Council Resolution 242 of 22 November, 1967 provided the basis for a just and durable settlement of this serious and long outstanding problem.

The Prime Ministers discussed the current situation in the Indian Ocean area. They both agreed that the area should be free from international tensions, great power rivalry and military escalation. In this connection, the two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their support for the concept of the Indian Ocean as a zone of peace. They noted with satisfaction the establishment of the United Nations Ad Hoc Committee on the Indian Ocean and the growing support for the proposal by an increasing number of countries.

The Prime Ministers of Australia and India agreed that the creation of a zone of peace in the Indian Ocean would be a positive step towards the reduction of tensions and rivalries in this region and agreed to cooperate bilaterally and with all states concerned towards this end.

The two Prime Ministers reaffirmed their belief in the equality of mankind irrespective of race or colour. They expressed their abhorrence of policies of racial discrimination, such as apartheid, which flagrantly violate the United Nations Charter. The Prime Minister of India noted with appreciation that Australia had resumed membership of the UN Decolonization Committee and that Australia had signed and was now taking steps towards ratifying the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination.

The Prime Minister of Australia informed the Indian Prime Minister of the strong opposition of the countries of the South Pacific to the current and proposed program of atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons in the area.

Both Prime Ministers, mindful of United Nations endorsement of the Partial Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, the Resolution of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment held in Stockholm in June 1972 and the Resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly, and of the World Health Assembly in May 1973 on the harmful effects of ionizing atomic radiation, reiterated their opposition to the testing of nuclear weapons in all environments and in particular to atmospheric testing by whatever nation.

Views were exchanged on matters concerning the law of the sea, and it was agreed that officials of the two countries would maintain close contact with a view to identifying their common interests before the 1974 Law of the Sea Conference.

The two Prime Ministers expressed concern at the increasing gulf between the developing and the developed countries of the world. They were of the view that the gap must be reduced and eventually bridged in the interest of peace and harmony among all nations. They also emphasised that the launching of the International Development Strategy of the United Nations Second Development Decade, enjoining the developed countries to help reduce the growing economic disparity between developed and developing countries, was a significant landmark in international economic cooperation.

They expressed the hope that the developed countries would fulfil their obligations under the International Development Strategy. The Australian Prime Minister stated that his Government not only intends to expand the present programs of assistance in

Asia, to the Pacific and Africa but is also giving consideration to further changes in Australia's preferential trade with developing countries.

The Prime Ministers welcomed the enlargement of the European communities and hoped that the communities would adopt a liberal and outward-looking approach which would contribute to international development and world peace. They noted that Australia and India would be looking to the communities to play a positive part in the forthcoming GATT Multilateral Trade negotiations and recorded the importance which they attach to the need for these negotiations to deal with the problems facing world trade in agricultural commodities in a satisfactory and equitable manner.

The two Prime Ministers expressed their satisfaction with the continuing warm and friendly relations between Australia and India and reaffirmed their desire to intensify cooperation in all fields.

Both Prime Ministers welcomed the opportunity for consultations and exchange of views afforded by the annual Australia/India officials' talks. It was decided that the next session would take place in Canberra towards the end of the year. The two Prime Ministers agreed on the benefits of expanding contacts between representatives of Australia and India in all regional and international forums.

The Prime Ministers welcomed the development of cultural exchanges between India and Australia since the signing of the India-Australia Cultural Agreement in 1971. They expressed their desire to see a further extension in the number and variety of these exchanges at all levels. In particular they looked forward to the further development of links between universities in the two countries, both in the scientific area, where there was much common experience to be shared, and in the field of the humanities as a contribution to a better knowledge of each other's history and culture.

The two Prime Ministers emphasised the importance of greater collaboration in economic, technical and scientific fields, the desirability of securing greater diversification of economic relations and the possibility of joint ventures. The Prime Minister of India expressed the Government of India's appreciation of Australian assistance to economic development in India particularly Australian involvement in long-range agricultural development programs.

The Australian Prime Minister stated his Government's intention to maintain and if possible to expand its participation in India's economic development.

The two Prime Ministers expressed their complete satisfaction with the results of their discussions.

The Prime Minister of Australia expressed his warm appreciation of the hospitality shown to him and the members of

his party during his visit. He extended an invitation to the Prime Minister of India to visit Australia again. The invitation was accepted with pleasure. The dates of the visit would be settled by mutual consultation."