



PRIME MINISTER

PRESS STATEMENT NO. 127

11 September 1973

MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTH-EAST ASIA

The Prime Minister, Mr. Whitlam, announced in Canberra today that Australia will participate in the next meeting of the Ministerial Conference for the Economic Development of South-East Asia. The meeting will be held in Tokyo on 12-13 October. It was proposed that the Special Minister of State would represent Australia at the Ministerial Conference after his attendance at the United Nations General Assembly.

The Prime Minister said that Australia welcomed the opportunity to participate in the work of the Ministerial Conference which aimed at assisting in the development of the countries of South-East Asia. Countries attending the Conference will be: Indonesia, Japan, Khmer Republic, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and the Republic of Vietnam.

Meetings of the Ministerial Conference have been held annually and have presented an opportunity for participants to discuss their developmental efforts and possible intra-regional co-operation. The Ministerial Conference has been the sponsor of a number of regional projects and studies related to the solution of regional problems. Among the projects and studies in hand at the present time are:

- The South-East Asian Fisheries Development Centre,
- The South-East Asian Promotion Centre for Trade,
Investment and Tourism,
- The Regional Project on Transport and Communications,
- A project on Population and Family Planning,
- A project on Public Health and Pesticide Control,
- The South-East Asian Medical and Health Organisation,
- A Study Group on Asian Administration,
- The South-East Asian College of Engineering,
- A Study of Development Assistance for South-East Asia.

The Prime Minister said that these projects indicated the wide range of interests in economic and development matters dealt with by the Ministerial Conference. He believed that Australia could make a useful contribution to the Conference and noted the importance which the Australian Government attached to co-operation in the region to foster more rapid economic development to improve the conditions of life of the people of the region.

CANBERRA, A.C.T.