



DEPARTMENT OF
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PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO CHINA

The Prime Minister, Mr Whitlam, announced today that his foreshadowed visit to China this year would take place from 31 October to 3 November.

The visit will be the first official visit to China by an Australian Prime Minister, but it will be Mr Whitlam's second visit. He first visited China in July 1971 when Leader of the Opposition.

Mr Whitlam said that his visit would provide a valuable opportunity to exchange views with the Chinese leadership on a wide range of international issues as well as bilateral questions. Mr Whitlam commented that the visit would be particularly useful in reviewing the development of Australia's relations with China since the Government recognised the People's Republic in December 1972.

Mr Whitlam will be accompanied by the Treasurer (Mr Crean), the Minister for Northern Development (Dr Patterson) and the Minister for Minerals and Energy (Mr Connor) who will

hold discussions with their Chinese counterparts.

Mr Whitlam said that the participation of these Ministers would both broaden the exchanges and enable the participants to focus in depth on specific areas of mutual interest. He commented that he was pleased with the progress made in Australia's relations with China to date, particularly in view of the long period of isolation between the two countries. He said he hoped his visit would make a significant contribution towards the development of a broader and more balanced relationship with China.

Mr Whitlam will be accompanied by Mrs Whitlam and a number of senior officials.