



PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

11 FEBRUARY 1977

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER AND PRIME MINISTER OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA ON THE DEFENCE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND AUSTRALIA

The Prime Minister of Papua New Guinea, the Rt. Hon. Michael Somare, MP, and the Prime Minister of Australia, the Rt. Hon. Malcolm Fraser, CH, MP, today issued a joint statement on the future defence relationship between Papua New Guinea and Australia.

The two Prime Ministers affirmed that both their Governments attached high importance to continuing the close co-operation between their two countries in defence matters. They acknowledged their Governments' desire to contribute to the strengthening of peace and stability in their common region. They declared that it was their Governments' intention to consult, at the request of either, about matters affecting their common security interests and about other aspects of their defence relationship.

Mr. Fraser confirmed Australia's willingness to continue, at the request of the Papua New Guinea Government, to assist in the development of the Papua New Guinea Defence Force, and in development projects carried out by Australian Service units in Papua New Guinea, through such arrangements as:

- the attachment of Australian servicemen to the Papua New Guinea Defence Force
- the location in Papua New Guinea of formed units of the Australian Services
- the provision of military training, both in Australia and Papua New Guinea
- the undertaking of joint projects which will develop particular Papua New Guinea Defence Force capabilities
- co-operation in combined exercises between the Australian and Papua New Guinea forces in either country
- assistance with transport, logistic support and technical services.

The two Prime Ministers agreed that the continuation of such arrangements, and the details of their implementation, would be as decided by their two Governments from time to time.

The two Prime Ministers noted that both Governments had already entered into the following Agreement and subsidiary Arrangements negotiated by the Papua New Guinea Minister for Defence, the Hon. Sir Maori Kiki and the Australian Minister for Defence, the Hon. D.J. Killen:

- a Status of Forces Agreement to make proper legal provision, in accordance with customary international practice, for the status of all Service personnel from either country present in the other. This Agreement would be registered with the United Nations;
- an Arrangement for continuing with the provision of supply support to the Papua New Guinea Department of Defence by the Department of Defence, Australia; and
- an Arrangement to continue with consultative procedures to ensure that there would be adequate and timely consultations between their two Governments on politically sensitive situations in which Australian loan personnel might be involved.

Both Prime Ministers expressed their satisfaction and confidence that this joint statement, and the Agreement and Arrangements mentioned in it, appropriately reflected the desire of their Governments to maintain and develop the close and co-operative defence relationship between their two countries.