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~~Briefing Section~~

PRIME MINISTER

FOR PRESS

FRIDAY, JANUARY 23 1981

COMMUTATION OF DEATH SENTENCE OF KIM DAE JUNG

The Government welcomes the decision to commute the sentence of death imposed by a military court on 17 September on the Korean opposition leader Mr Kim Dae Jung.

In urging clemency for Mr Kim I had made clear to the ROK the deep concern of the Australian Government, the Parliament, Church leaders, businessmen and of the Australian community in general.

We value the decision that has been taken. Had Mr Kim been executed this would clearly have been an obstacle to the continued growth and development of our relationship with the ROK.

The new ROK Government has proposed many great changes to the political, social and economic structure of the country. We wish President Chun well in these endeavours and express the hope that further steps taken may broaden national and international respect and support for his Government.

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