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PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

31 May 1983

Australia will host the 14th Meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Canberra, from 28-30 August 1983.

This will be the first major international conference hosted by Australia since my Government came to office. This is particularly appropriate in view of the great importance Australia attaches to South Pacific regional co-operation and its relations with the countries of the South Pacific.

I look forward to the opportunity that this Meeting will provide for discussions at Head of Government level on a range of political and economic issues and particularly on matters of special concern to Forum member countries.

I am pleased that the Heads of Government of all the Forum member countries have indicated they will be able to attend.

The member countries are Australia, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Western Samoa. The Federated States of Micronesia is also an observer member and will be represented at the Meeting.

The formal Meeting session will take place on 29-30 August at the Lakeside International Hotel and this will be preceded by an informal gathering of Forum leaders on 28 August.

Australia has been a member of the Forum since its foundation in 1971 and hosted the second Forum Meeting in Canberra in 1972.