



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

2 November 1983

The Prime Minister and Foreign Minister today met with the Heads of Mission of Commonwealth African countries (Ghana, Mauritius, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia).

At the meeting the attached aide-memoire was presented in response to Australia's new policy initiatives on sporting contacts with South Africa



AIDE MEMOIRE

The Heads of Mission of Commonwealth African countries (Ghana, Mauritius, Nigeria, Uganda and Zambia) accredited to Australia have been encouraged by the official statement released by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, on October 26, 1983 with regard to the new policy initiatives of the Government of Australia on sporting contacts with South Africa. They hope that in the implementation of these policies, care would be taken to avoid misinterpretation with regard to the amateur and professional status of sportsmen and women from South Africa.

There is no doubt that many African and Third World Commonwealth countries would be heartened by this significant strengthening of Australia's anti-apartheid position, which should further encourage other Commonwealth countries to adhere to the spirit and the letter of the Gleneagles Agreement.

The Heads of Mission also note with appreciation the decision of the Australian Government to permit both the ANC of South Africa and SWAPO of Namibia to open information offices in Australia. This move will significantly assist in keeping the Australian people informed about the true situation in South Africa and in Namibia. The Scholarship scheme for the victims of apartheid, and the arrangement for the opponents of apartheid to visit Australia and share their experiences with the Australian public also deserve commendation.

Mindful that the Australian Government has yet to take a final decision on the question of flights by South African Airways and Qantas to and from Southern Africa, the Heads of Mission sincerely hope that the final decision will help to reinforce Australia's commendable position in the overall struggle for the elimination of the apartheid system.