



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

15 OCTOBER 1985

STATEMENT BY THE ACTING PRIME MINISTER

I have this morning sent the following message to President Reagan:

"Dear Mr President

The Government of Australia understands and shares the deep concern of the Government of the USA at the acts of the terrorists who illegally seized the "Achille Lauro" and murdered an American passenger.

It agrees with, and has complete sympathy with, the declaration of the Government of the USA that terrorists should be proceeded against according to the established legal processes and that all countries in the international community should meet their proper obligations in this process. Australia certainly will meet its responsibilities in this respect and we have conveyed this commitment to your Government. The Government of Australia understands the concerns of the Government of the USA to make these terrorists subject to legal accountability.

This incident is the latest in a cycle of violence and counter-violence in the Middle East which will not stop until the underlying causes of the Middle East dispute are addressed and resolved.

Lionel Bowen
Acting Prime Minister."