



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

4 June 1986

The occasion of World Environment Day (5 June) is an opportunity to emphasise the relationships between the goals of environmental protection and of the International Year of Peace.

The common theme in the pursuit of peace and the protection of the environment is people living in harmony - with each other and with their environment. Australians, like all other citizens of the Earth, should support the cause of a just and lasting peace, and must carefully manage and nurture the resources which the environment provides to sustain life.

In our own region, an important element of these twin pursuits is the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty, which I signed at Rarotonga last year. The Treaty is the product of deeply-felt regional concerns on nuclear proliferation, nuclear testing and the dumping of radioactive waste in the South Pacific. It has important security and environmental provisions. Legislation currently before the Federal Parliament gives effect to Australia's obligations under the Treaty.

Australia is also playing a very active role in the development of a convention for the protection of the environment in the South Pacific Region.

The world's nuclear and conventional weapons represent enormous destructive potential. Considerable human and material resources are devoted to their production. There is a critical need for substantial, balanced and verifiable reductions in the level of armaments. The Australian Government attaches high priority to this objective.

These reductions would lead to a safer world. They would reduce a major threat to the global environment and could release significant resources to advance economic and social development.