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PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

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Today marks the twentieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

The NPT is the basis of international efforts to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The Treaty makes a major contribution to international peace and security and is generally recognised as the single most effective and widely adhered to nuclear arms control agreement in existence. Australia ratified the Treaty on 23 January 1973.

Membership of the Treaty provides reassurance to the international community and neighbouring states of a nation's peaceful nuclear intentions and has become the standard for responsible international nuclear behaviour.

Australia continues to urge universal adherence to the NPT. It is my hope that the twentieth anniversary of its opening for signature will act as a spur to those countries which have yet to commit themselves to the Treaty.