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PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

18 JULY 1988

JOINT STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, MR HAWKE, THE PRIME MINISTER OF NEW ZEALAND, MR LANGE AND THE PRIME MINISTER OF IRELAND, MR HAUGHEY.

"Nelson Mandela celebrates his 70th birthday. Although he has been held in a South African jail for 25 years Nelson Mandela remains a potent symbol of freedom for all those living under the vicious regime of apartheid."

These are the comments made by the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt Hon. David Lange, the Prime Minister of Ireland, Mr Charles T. Haughey, and the Prime Minister of Australia, Hon. R.J.L. Hawke, in a joint statement issued today at the conclusion of Mr Haughey's visit to Australia and New Zealand.

The Prime Ministers went on to say that Nelson Mandela has dedicated himself to the struggle against apartheid on behalf of all African people. "He has fought against white domination and he has fought against black domination", they said. "His ideals are those of a democratic and free society in which all races live together with equal opportunities".

"We call on South Africa to release Nelson Mandela without condition and to remove the ban on the African National Congress", said the Prime Ministers. "This would act as a clear signal to those who respect freedom and the democratic process that the South African Government is genuine in its desire to take part in a peacefully negotiated settlement."

"There must be a dawning of sanity in Pretoria if the worst is not to happen", the Prime Ministers concluded.