



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

22 SEPTEMBER 1988

I am very pleased to announce that the President of Italy, His Excellency the Honourable Francesco Cossiga, will make a State visit to Australia in our Bicentennial year. He will be in Australia from 10-17 October.

During his visit, President Cossiga will travel widely in Australia and will meet the Premiers and Governors of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia and Queensland. He will also meet members of the Italian Community in many centres around Australia. While in Canberra, President Cossiga will stay at Government House as the guest of their Excellencies the Governor-General and Lady Stephen.

I look forward to welcoming President Cossiga as the first Italian Head of State to visit Australia in more than 20 years.

The President's visit will add an extra dimension to the very close and friendly relations which already exist between the peoples of Australia and Italy and will also, I believe, help point to some of the economic, cultural and other areas where our relationship has potential to expand. The Italian economy is one of the most outstandingly successful in Western Europe with Italy now being one of the top five industrial powers in the world. There is thus, I am sure, great scope for the expansion of economic co-operation between our two countries.

The President's visit will also serve to celebrate the magnificent contribution to this nation of almost one million Australians who are ethnically and culturally linked to Italy.

The President will be accompanied, in Brisbane and Canberra, by Italian Foreign Minister Mr Guilio Andreotti and Mrs Andreotti. The Italian Deputy Foreign Minister, Mrs Susanna Agnelli, will accompany the President from Brisbane in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney. Mr Andreotti will hold separate talks with the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Trade and other Cabinet Ministers. President Cossiga will also be accompanied by Mr Oscar Mammi, Minister for Telecommunications, and Mrs Mammi, and Ms Vincenza Bono Parrino, Minister for Culture.