



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

8 NOVEMBER 1988

The Premier of China, Mr Li Peng, will visit Australia from 14 to 20 November at the invitation of the Australian Government. His visit will be one of the most important of this Bicentennial year.

I am delighted that Mr Li has chosen to visit Australia as part of his overseas tour since his appointment as Premier in March. His visit will serve to strengthen the very warm and friendly ties which have been built up between our countries over a decade and a half, and which have always been a priority for my Government.

Australia and China have much to offer each other. In one aspect, this is demonstrated by our two-way trade, which has grown fourteen-fold in the past fifteen years, and by the steadily increasing interest in bilateral investment.

But there are other links which, while less visible, provide an enduring basis for continuing harmony between our nations: the links of education, scientific cooperation, cultural exchange and personal friendship. I value highly the friendships that I made during my visits to China as Prime Minister in 1984 and 1986 and visits to Australia by Premier Zhao Ziyang in 1983 and General Secretary Hu Yaobang in 1985.

In my discussions with the Premier in Canberra on 17 and 18 November I shall be emphasising the importance Australia attaches to its relations with China and my hope that we can expand and deepen the contacts between our countries. I look forward to exchanging views on major issues facing the international community and, in particular, to discussing new developments in our region.

Premier Li will be accompanied by five colleagues of ministerial rank: the Foreign Minister, Mr Qian Qichen; the Minister of Metallurgical Industry, Mr Qi Yuanjing; the Minister of Labour, Mr Luo Gan; the Minister of Aeronautics and Astronautics Industry, Mr Lin Zongtang; and the Director of the China Rural Development Research Centre of the State Council, Mr Du Runsheng. The Premier's party will also include several Vice Ministers and a team of senior officials.

The Premier will visit Perth, the Mount Channar iron ore joint venture in the Pilbara region of Western Australia, Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne.

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CORRECTION ...

In second paragraph of Press Release on the Premier of China's visit to Australia, please read as "his first overseas tour".

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