



## PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF DOORSTOP, KARACHI AIRPORT - 9 FEBRUARY 1989

E & O E - PROOF ONLY

JOURNALIST: There are reports today in the Pakistani press that Rajiv Gandhi is very concerned over the recent successful missile testing and highly unlikely to be drawn to signing any non-proliferation treaty.

PM: I suppose you can understand that if one side is prepared to make a particular advance the other is going to be concerned but I think the lesson of history is that the interests of neither side in any potential conflict are advanced if they just keep building up the capacity for destruction of the other. That certainly I think ... been understood at the level of the superpowers. I hope it will be understood regionally.

JOURNALIST: Would you be putting that argument to Mr Gandhi?

PM: As I have said before, I don't in advance indicate what I will be saying to people with whom I am going to speak. But I think it's fairly obvious that there is a compelling logic in that which has recommended itself to the superpowers. As I have said, Australia without seeking to intrude itself into the affairs of this region is entitled on its record to say that it has a real interest and a commitment and a capacity to contribute to the causes of disarmament. So we will be talking frankly with the Prime Minister of India as I indeed did with the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

JOURNALIST: How potentially dangerous is this sort of stand-off between India and Pakistan?

PM: I think the greatest disaster, actual as well as potential, is that it is a diversion of resources. I think that good sense will prevail between these nations and with the friends of these nations to stop any actual conflict. But the real on-going - not a potential - the real on-going disaster is that in two countries which have such demand upon governments to provide services for their people who are in need, so much is diverted into the defence area and the capacity for destruction. That's not a potential, as I say, but an actual disaster.

JOURNALIST: Given that last argument about the diversion of resources, would the Australian government ever consider making aid conditional on some sort of nuclear monitoring as the US Congress has done to Pakistan?

PM: I think we are in a different position to the United States in that respect but I don't think at this stage we're looking at conditionality.

ends