



PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

12 MAY 1989

1989 is the 125th anniversary of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement and these organisations have taken this opportunity to appeal internationally for special humanitarian gestures to mark this occasion.

Successive Australian Governments have given support to the ICRC in its assistance to the victims of natural and other disasters and tragedies throughout the world.

My Government strongly supports the endeavours of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. In response to their current appeal, I am providing them today, through Mr Alan McLean, the Secretary General of the Australian Red Cross Society, with a cheque for \$250,000 for use in assisting those devastated by the current bloodshed and civil disruption in Lebanon.

I have in recent days met representatives of the Lebanese community who have brought home to me again the desperate plight of their friends and relatives in their once harmonious land. I believe that a humanitarian offering to those people is something which all Australian would fully endorse.

As I have announced separately today, the Government is also providing \$250,000 to Lebanon through the appeal recently launched by the United Nations Secretary-General.

I take this opportunity to express the deep appreciation of the Australian Government to the Australian Red Cross Society, which in 1989 is celebrating its 75th anniversary, for the magnificent work it continues to do.