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PRIME MINISTER

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**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF AUSTRALIA
THE HON R J L HAWKE AC MP
ARRIVAL STATEMENT
WHITE HOUSE, WASHINGTON - 27 JUNE 1989**

Mr President,

It's an immense pleasure for me, in these three days in Washington, to renew our long friendship; and it is a special pleasure and privilege to join with you, as the elected chief of the greatest democracy, in re-affirming the deep and enduring friendship of our two countries. In you, Mr President, the Western world has an experienced and forward-looking leader and Australia has a valued and long-standing friend.

Today, Mr President, I look forward to continuing the exchange of views, on all the issues affecting our countries, in the spirit of friendship and frankness which has always characterised our association, and which befits the relationship - the partnership - between Australia and the United States.

Mr President, we are meeting at a time of historic and far-reaching change across the world.

There now exist unparalleled new opportunities, challenges and responsibilities for leadership and positive achievement on crucial issues of peace and security, East-West relations, economic progress, world trade, and the protection of the world environment.

You have already demonstrated, Mr President, your determination to give leadership. Your constructive approach to East-West relations is demonstrated by your creative and bold proposal for the reduction of conventional weapons in Europe. In this, and other arms control endeavours, aimed at reducing nuclear armaments and banning chemical weapons, you know you can count on Australia's support.

In this new and challenging era, the constancy, depth and vitality of the alliance between Australia and the United States will remain critically important to the national interests of both our countries. But it has a wider regional and, indeed, global significance. Under ANZUS, the joint Australia-US defence facilities in Australia are significant elements in maintaining the peace and supporting the effectiveness of arms control and disarmament agreements.

Over recent years our co-operation and consultations at the highest levels have been stronger, broader and more productive than at any other time since ANZUS was formed.

But our relationship goes far beyond our defence alliance. It encompasses dynamic economic links and broad and deep human and cultural associations.

Above all, it is based on the firmest of foundations: our shared commitment to democracy and to individual liberty within the rule of law.

Mr President, it is precisely because of the depth and maturity of our relationship that the differences of views that do exist between us can be faced openly and honestly - as, for example, on some trade matters, particularly aspects of agricultural policy.

I am confident that today we will be able to focus on ways to minimise, if not entirely resolve, such differences. I look forward to exploring with you means of co-operating in the current Uruguay Round of Multilateral Trade Negotiations to achieve some progress towards the goal we both want - an international trading system based on free and fair competition. I know we both understand that moving in the opposite direction, towards a world of separate and competing trade blocs, would be economically disastrous and, quite possibly, strategically destabilising.

That is one of the reasons, I might add, why earlier this year I suggested the development of closer regional economic co-operation in the Asia-Pacific region. The implementation of my proposal could, I believe, improve significantly the chances for success in the Uruguay Round - as well as acting as a catalyst for further growth in our dynamic region.

I am very keen, Mr President, to exchange views with you on this proposal. I welcome, indeed, Secretary Baker's support last night for a new mechanism for multilateral co-operation among the nations of the region as an idea whose time has come. I am delighted that the United States supports my call for a Ministerial meeting this year as a first step, if - as I hope and expect - there is a consensus in the region.

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And I make this final point: the American presence has been a prime factor in creating and maintaining the conditions for stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific region. America's continuing involvement in our region remains a key to its future progress.

Mr President, we have before us an imposing agenda for dialogue. What gives this visit and our discussions their real substance, however, and what will make them so mutually beneficial, is the sense of common purpose we bring to these matters - based on our common national and international interests and our common commitment to peace and freedom.

I thank you again, Mr President, for the warmth of your welcome. You have visited Australia as Vice-President. I look forward to welcoming you to our country - as President of the United States, as a true friend of Australia.
