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PRIME MINISTER

FOR MEDIA

20 JULY 1989

I am delighted to announce the appointment of Sir Ninian Stephen as Australia's first Ambassador for the Environment.

Sir Ninian will clearly bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to this important assignment, which will involve the following tasks:

- . to project and promote the Government's international environmental policies to the international community and within Australia;
- . to advise the Government on international environmental policy matters;
- . to represent the Government in bilateral, regional and multilateral environmental negotiations, meetings and conferences (eg the United Nations Environment Programme, relevant Antarctic Treaty system meetings, ad hoc conferences such as The Hague); and
- . to assist in liaison between the Government and domestic and international non-governmental environmental organisations.

Sir Ninian will report to two Ministers - Senator Evans and Senator Richardson - and to me.

Many of the world's environmental problems are global in nature and can only be successfully tackled by concerted international action.

Examples include the prospect of global warming induced by the greenhouse effect, the damage done to the ozone layer by chlorofluorocarbons and halons, acid rain, the loss of biological diversity, transfrontier pollution and disposal of wastes and the over-exploitation of the world's ocean fisheries.

The need to tackle these problems through international collaboration is now well recognised.

As a result, an increasing number of initiatives are developing which require Australian participation in the fullest possible way.

Some of these initiatives come under the umbrella of the United Nations, and others arise under different sponsorship such as within the Commonwealth.

Given the rapidly growing dimension of these problems and of the international efforts to counter them, Sir Ninian's appointment will help give Australia a strong and clear voice in the important international debates on environmental issues now taking place.

Sir Ninian will be overseas for the next four months, on previously-arranged assignments. He will take up his duties immediately in a part-time capacity, and will assume a full-time role upon his return to Australia.

THE RT HON SIR NINIAN STEPHEN
AK. GCMG. GCVO. KBE

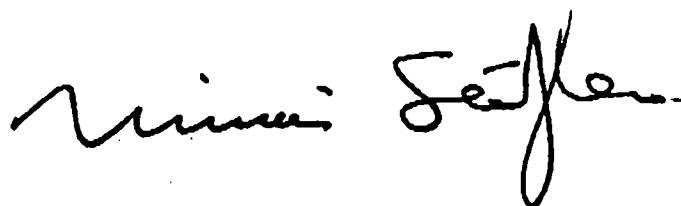
4 Treasury Place,
Melbourne, VIC, 3000

I am delighted to accept the offer of appointment as Australia's
Ambassador for the Environment.

The position will, I am sure, be both challenging and absorbing.
I hope that in it I can be of some service to Australia and at
the same time help, as best I can, in tackling those
environmental problems that are now proving of world-wide
concern.

The issues they raise are, of course, global and Australia has a
real part to play in facing them. They also happen to be ones
which, even more than most international issues, present
opportunities for really constructive dialogue between nations.

Like so many other Australians, I have long had a personal
interest in them and very much look forward to playing an active
part in advancing Australia's concerns through this new
assignment.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ninian Stephen". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.