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**PRIME MINISTER**

FOR MEDIA

15 DECEMBER 1989

I am delighted that the Dalai Lama's long-standing and peaceful attempts to improve the lot of the Tibetan people have been recognised by the award of the Nobel Peace Prize.

I join many other members of the international community in offering my congratulations to the Dalai Lama. The Australian Government hopes that the award will contribute to reducing tensions in Tibet and will help the Tibetan people achieve the universal standards of human rights they are entitled to expect.

Australia acknowledges that Tibet is part of China. But we consider it important that universally accepted standards of human rights are observed there, including the right of Tibetans to practice their cultural and religious traditions. We are particularly concerned about reports from Tibet of detentions of people engaged in peaceful demonstrations, ill treatment of prisoners and harsh sentences for dissidents.

We have conveyed to the Chinese Government on a number of occasions our concerns over the human rights situation in Tibet. We will continue to do so whenever necessary.