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PRIME MINISTER

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23 JUNE 1990

New Zealand Prime Minister the Rt. Hon. Geoffrey Palmer will visit Australia from 28 June to 3 July 1990 as a guest of the Australian Government.

This will be Mr Palmer's first visit to Australia as Prime Minister and it reciprocates my visit to New Zealand in February this year to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the Treaty of Waitangi.

Mr Palmer's visit coincides with the achievement on 1 July of full free trade in goods between Australia and New Zealand under CER.

The main topic of discussions during the visit will be the current state and future directions of the CER agreement.

Our talks will also cover a range of bilateral, regional and global issues, including the environment, when Mr Palmer meets with me and other Ministers in Canberra on 2 July. Mr Palmer will also visit Melbourne to meet community leaders and representatives of the business community.

Both Australia and New Zealand can be proud of the speed and magnitude of the progress achieved to date under the CER Agreement. Our next challenge is to make progress towards removal of the few remaining barriers to trade in the services area, and to achieve greater harmonisation in a range of areas including business law, quarantine, and customs. I am confident that our talks will reinforce the momentum for reform.

I welcome Prime Minister Palmer's visit not only as an opportunity to mark the achievements of the CER Agreement to date, but also as a timely demonstration of our political will to continue the process of greater integration of our economies.