



PRIME MINISTER

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**SPEECH BY THE PRIME MINISTER
RECEPTION AT THE GERMAN EMBASSY
ON THE OCCASION OF
THE UNIFICATION OF GERMANY
CANBERRA, 3 OCTOBER 1990**

I am sure I speak for all Australians when I express my congratulations to you, Ambassador, and through you to the people of Germany, on their grand achievement of unification.

As I said recently in Parliament, the Government of Australia unequivocally welcomes this historic event - an achievement the German people have built in jubilation, optimism and above all in a spirit of peacefulness.

Less than a year ago we witnessed those unforgettable television reports of ordinary German people rebelling against the artificial division of their country, and by sheer force of popular demand bringing down at last that bleak symbol of post-war division, the Berlin Wall.

Since then we have seen the dismantling of Checkpoint Charlie and the free movement of people between East and West Germany. Only last month the four occupying powers agreed to relinquish their war-time rights, paving the way for today's creation of a united, sovereign Germany.

A few hours ago - at 12 midnight in Berlin - the hope of unification became a reality.

So we are witnessing today a landmark event in the political history of the Twentieth Century.

The breathtaking speed and effectiveness of the process of unification was made possible by the spirit of co-operation and trust displayed by all the countries involved.

I congratulate all those leaders and Governments on the high sense of responsibility they have demonstrated.

I have written to my friend, Chancellor Kohl, and to Prime Minister de Maiziere, passing on Australia's congratulations and assuring them of our desire for close and productive relations between Australia and the new Germany.

And I welcome the assurance I received only today by letter from Chancellor Kohl that through its regained national unity, Germany wants to serve the cause of global peace and advance the unification of Europe - at the same time as it will stand by the moral and legal obligations resulting from German history.

In the new post-cold war era ushered in by the unification of Germany, the world will look to Germany and to Europe to play a new leadership role in making the world peaceful and prosperous. For example, the world will be looking to Germany, and to Europe, to show leadership in the reform of world trade in the Uruguay Round.

Over the weekend, Berlin hosted a marathon whose course covered both sides of the Brandenburg Gate.

You can understand our pride that the Berlin marathon was won by an Australian, Steve Moneghetti, in his personal best time and in the fastest speed recorded in the world this year.

Just as the hosting of the marathon is a symbol and a proof of the unification of Germany, so may Moneghetti's victory be an auspicious omen of the ties between Australia and the new Germany - ties that we want to see strengthened, deepened and enriched in the future.

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