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PRIME MINISTER

TRANSCRIPT OF SPEECH AT DEPARTURE OF HMAS SYDNEY, GARDEN ISLAND, SYDNEY, 12 NOVEMBER 1990

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Commander Cordner, members of the company of HMAS Sydney and ladies and gentlemen.

I'm here on behalf of ... the Government and the people of Australia to give you, members of the ship's company, a very simple message. That is this, to wish you bon voyage and a safe return.

I want you to know that, overwhelmingly, the people of Australia, and indeed of the world at large, are united in their conviction that the invasion and annexation of Kuwait by Iraq is an unacceptable action in terms of the maintenance of a reasonable world. It's something that cannot be allowed to stand. I, and the Government, and the people of this country, and indeed the people of the world, overwhelmingly, have the hope that this action of Saddam Hussein will be brought to an end by peaceful means.

Indeed, I want you to know, members of this ship's company, that this mission on which you're embarking now is the most important part of trying to give effect to that hope of a peaceful resolution of this dispute. For indeed the enforcement of the sanctions that have been imposed, under the United Nations, remain the strongest hope for bringing about a peaceful resolution to this situation. And indeed, you would know and you would, like I am, be proud of the way in which your predecessors the Darwin and Adelaide have been over there doing a magnificent job in playing their part with others in imposing this embargo successfully. They have, as I've said, done their ships, done this great Navy and they've done this great nation considerable credit in their service. And I know, my friends, that when you arrive there you will do the same thing.

I repeat, that it is a matter of pride for all of us in this country that we have such fine ships, that we have such great crews and great leadership. That we're able to call upon as a nation, at this time, when we as Australia seek to play our part in ensuring that we're going to have a world which can be a peaceful world where

small nations are going to be able to live in peace and sure that they are not going to be taken over by aggressive neighbours. Those are fundamentally important principles and they are principles that we have to be prepared to make commitments to achieve.

So that, my friends, is the message, as I say, that I bring to you on behalf of the Government, across the whole political spectrum. Dr Hewson's here, Mr Greiner, this is the whole of Australia - governments, opposition, all of the people.

I want you to know that you leave Australia and go on your mission with the wholehearted support of all of us and you take our wishes for a safe voyage and a safe return.

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