



PRIME MINISTER

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The present Secretary of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Mr Richard Woolcott, AO, is nearing the end of a long and distinguished career in that Department, and has advised the Government of his plan to retire on and from 15 February 1992.

Mr Woolcott joined the then Department of External Affairs as a trainee in 1950, and after posting to a range of places became our Ambassador in Jakarta (1975-78), Ambassador in Manila (1978-82) and Ambassador and Permanent Representative at the United Nations in New York (1982-88) before taking up his appointment as Secretary in 1988.

One of the many notable achievements was his period as Australian representative on the Security Council in 1985-86 and as President of the Security Council in November 1986.

More recently, he was my Special Envoy in the initiative to promote a regional economic forum for Asia and the Pacific (APEC).

But he will be remembered most for his dedicated and professional service for so many years and for so many governments.

The Government will be recommending to the Governor-General the appointment in his place, from 15 February 1992, of Dr Peter Wilenski, AO.

Dr Wilenski has held a number of posts at Secretary level for much of the past two decades including a period as Chairman of the then Public Service Board and, before taking up his present position as our Ambassador and Permanent Representative at the United Nations, as Secretary of the Department of Transport and Communications.

Dr Wilenski's early career in the public sector was spent in the then Department of Foreign Affairs. In a number of the positions he has held since, he has been closely involved in international as well as national affairs.

He has also made, over the years, a notable contribution to management improvement in the public sector.

Since his appointment there nearly three years ago, Dr Wilenski has been an outstanding representative for Australia at the United Nations and he is eminently well qualified to take over from Mr Woolcott the secretaryship of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.