



## **PRIME MINISTER**

**TRANSCRIPT OF THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P.J KEATING MP  
DOORSTOP, WISMA NEGARA STATE GUEST HOUSE, TUESDAY,  
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### **E&OE PROOF COPY**

**J:** Prime Minister, you have had a very brief meeting with the Indonesian President, can you give us some idea of what the discussion was about?

**PM:** It was just a welcome and I think it had a nice relaxed air about it with a kind of informality that one can't engender without some real basis of a relationship which I hope we have developed over the last couple of years. So, it was a very convivial meeting and we'll get onto the matter of substance tomorrow, although I did have a chance on the way into the city to talk to Foreign Minister Alatas about some of the issues.

**J:** What are the matters of substance Prime Minister?

**PM:** Essentially I think, they are going to revolve around trade and investment issues and most particularly of course, the forthcoming APEC meeting in Seattle in November.

**J:** Will you be asking the Indonesians to agree to APEC becoming a community?

**PM:** I think the Indonesian Government understands well what the Eminent Persons Group has recommended and I think supports the general development which APEC is taking. But, again, that is a matter for Heads of Government and leaders at the November meeting and that is the whole point of the meeting - they will put the construction on APEC which they think is the appropriate one.

**J:** Their view seems to be though softly, softly.

**PM:** Maybe softly, softly, but I don't think slowly, slowly. I think they have got a nice balance between the pace of change and what it should

encompass, as I think we have as a country which has been very much involved in the development of APEC from its inception.

J: Mr Alatas has just told us he really appreciated your remarks in Washington on human rights, will you be going further down that path here?

PM: What I said there was one deals with a country on the totality of its relationship and we see the relationship with Indonesia in the broad, that is a large country of 180 million people, very geographically close to Australia, developing now at quite a pace and reaching out to the world and it also has its particular problems as developing countries do and this has been expressed in a number of ways. In part, of course, the problems in Timor a few years ago. But, I think the important thing is to see the relationship in the totality; we have made our position clear about these human rights issues, but we also are not a sort of mono-dimensional government. We are looking at Indonesia in the broad.

J: Prime Minister, given ASEAN's importance to APEC, at Seattle if the ASEAN leaders that are there have some doubts about changing to any kind of community faster than perhaps you would like, will Australia support that position?

PM: I don't think you understand well ... I mean the importance that the ASEAN countries put upon the development of the Asia-Pacific or APEC, they are more positive about this than the media generally gives credit. Australia, as a prime mover in this has had to take all views into account - those of the major powers, China, Japan the United States, Indonesia, those of the smaller countries, I think we have got the balance about right.

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