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# PRIME MINISTER

29/94

## INAUGURATION OF SOUTH AFRICAN PRESIDENT

Two former Prime Ministers, the Rt Hon Malcolm Fraser and the Hon Bob Hawke, will represent Australia at the inauguration of the new President of South Africa, scheduled to take place in Pretoria on 10 May 1994, following the elections on 27 April.

It is especially appropriate that Mr Hawke and Mr Fraser should attend the inauguration, since for more than 20 years Australian governments on both sides of politics sought an end to apartheid. From the early 1970s, despite a number of changes of Government, one constant, whichever party was in power, has been Australia's active opposition to apartheid in all its manifestations.

Both Mr Fraser and Mr Hawke were personally in the forefront of international efforts to end apartheid. Both were firmly committed to Commonwealth sanctions against South Africa.

As Prime Minister, Mr Fraser was one of the driving forces behind the Commonwealth ban on sporting contacts imposed as a result of the 1977 Gleneagles Agreement. Following his retirement from politics, the Commonwealth recognised Mr Fraser's standing in the struggle against apartheid by inviting him to be joint chair of the Commonwealth's Eminent Persons' Group (EPG) which helped encourage the development of political dialogue in South Africa.

During his term as Prime Minister, Mr Hawke was closely involved in Commonwealth efforts to end the oppression of black South Africans. In 1985 he made a strong personal commitment to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Nassau which agreed on the imposition of trade and investment sanctions against South Africa, and at subsequent Commonwealth meetings he was involved in strengthening the sanctions regime. In particular, he was involved in the development and promotion internationally of the concept of financial sanctions.

The Labor Government under Mr Hawke also led the way in developing the Commonwealth's policy of the phased reduction of sanctions in response to positive steps by South Africa in negotiating a transition to democracy.

Mr Fraser and Mr Hawke will carry with them the best wishes of the Government and people of Australia for the future of a democratic South Africa.

**CANBERRA**  
**15 April 1994**