



PRIME MINISTER

38/94

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP

SOUTH AFRICAN ELECTIONS

I wholeheartedly welcome the South African election result. It is a vindication of the many years of struggle in South Africa and a triumph for the democratic process.

I would like to pay particular tribute to the leadership and vision shown both by Nelson Mandela and F W De Klerk in the negotiations which led to these historic elections. Despite earlier violence and some minor practical problems in the electoral process, the elections represent the triumph of moderation over extremism and reason over anarchy. Ultimately, it is the spirit of reconciliation and forgiveness shown by all parties, especially those who were the victims of apartheid, which has made these elections so remarkable.

I am very pleased that Australia has been able to play a leading role both in supporting the fight against apartheid and in ensuring the success of the elections in South Africa. I am sure that all Australians will join with me in offering best wishes to President-elect Mandela, the incoming South African Government and all the citizens of the new South Africa in meeting the many difficult challenges which lie ahead. Australia stands ready to assist where it can in this task. I look forward to developing a strong and enduring relationship between our two countries.

I am sending messages of congratulations to Mr Mandela and to President De Klerk

CANBERRA

May 3, 1994