



PRIME MINISTER

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

VISIT TO AUSTRALIA BY THE PRIME MINISTER OF SINGAPORE, GOH CHOK TONG, 12-15 SEPTEMBER 1994

I am very pleased that the Prime Minister of Singapore, Goh Chok Tong, will be visiting Australia from 12-15 September as a Guest of the Government. During his time here, he will visit Canberra, Sydney and Queensland.

Australia's relations with Singapore are close, broad-based and long standing. Singapore is our largest trading partner in ASEAN (total trade was over \$5 billion in 1993-94) and our eight largest world-wide. Australian investment in Singapore is the largest we have in any ASEAN country and Singapore is the largest ASEAN investor in Australia.

We have a particularly close defence relationship with Singapore, notably through our common membership of the Five Power Defence Arrangement and through an extensive bilateral defence cooperation program.

We also work together very closely on wider international and regional issues especially in APEC, where our mutual commitment to an open and liberal multilateral trading system makes us natural partners. Singapore and Australia share a similar vision for the bilateral relationship and of the Asia-Pacific region more broadly.

I look forward to discussing both bilateral issues and important regional issues with Prime Minister Goh. Of note, we will be looking to advance the strategic linkages initiative which I launched during my visit to Singapore in 1992. The initiative aims to promote links between Australian and Singaporean companies with a view to developing joint business opportunities in third country markets.

We will also be looking to see how we can further develop our defence cooperation. On APEC, we will discuss our common interest in ensuring a successful APEC leaders meeting in November in Indonesia under the chairmanship of President Soeharto.

CANBERRA
9 September 1994