



PRIME MINISTER

EMBARGOED UNTIL 12.01AM 1 OCTOBER 1994

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

RECOGNITION OF PALAUAN INDEPENDENCE

I am pleased to announce that the Australian Government has extended formal recognition to the Republic of Palau following implementation of its Compact of Free Association with the United States.

Palau becomes the latest independent state in the Pacific and I look forward to the development of close links between our two countries.

I also welcome Palau's intention to join the South Pacific Forum and I hope we can co-operate closely in the Forum and in other regional organisations.

Australia will be represented at the Palau independence celebrations on 1 October by the Honourable Ben Humphreys MP. We will be establishing formal diplomatic relations with Palau as soon as possible.

On behalf of the Australian Government and people I offer my warm congratulations to President Kuniwo Nakamura and all Palauans at this historic moment.

CANBERRA
1 OCTOBER 1994