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PRIME MINISTER

**ADDRESS BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP
OPENING OF THE AUSTRALIAN BUSINESS CENTRE, TOKYO -
THURSDAY, 25 MAY 1995**

- I am very honoured that Mr Toyoshima, Chairman of JETRO, is present today on the opening of this Australian Business Centre.
- The Centre brings together in one location Australia's Commonwealth and State official export, investment and tourism promotion bodies.
- The Centre is the first of its kind for Australia
 - and it is fitting that it should be established in the capital of our greatest trading partner.
- It reflects our recognition of the continued importance of our economic relationship and confidence in its future.
- And, it shows our determination to work hard in this market, to diversify the base of our trade, to support long-standing business relationships and to help new ones get established.
- Between 1990 and 1993 Australia's exports of goods and services to Japan grew by nearly 20 per cent in Australian dollar terms and by over 4 per cent in US dollar terms
 - in either measure the growth in our exports exceeded the growth in Japan's total imports of goods and services.

- Our highest value-added exports (ETMS) grew at a trend rate of just over 11 per cent in the five year period to 1993-94.
- And our export of services for the five year period to 1992-93 grew at a rate of just under 12 per cent.
- Japanese figures for Japan's 1994 financial year say imports from Australia grew by 11 per cent over 1993.
- But there is no doubt we could and should do a lot better. The Government can help: with initiatives of this kind, with Austrade and, most importantly, by creating a competitive economic climate and one favourable to exporters. But in the final analysis its success depends on Australian business.
- The scale of Japan's economy needs to be understood by Australian exporters
 - a one per cent growth in Japan's GDP increases Japan's economy by the size of New Zealand's GDP
 - a small slice of a Japanese sectoral market, like housing or food, can be worth many times more than a large slice of the market in other countries.
- There is no question about the opportunities which exist in the emerging markets - but no Australian exporter should ignore the rewards of succeeding in Japan.
- And it should also be understood that, while Japan's market is difficult, it is opening up more and more
 - we must take advantage of the inevitable changes which are taking place in the structure of the Japanese economy, which are being speeded up by the appreciation of the yen.
- The lesson for Australia is that our opportunities are growing faster than perhaps many understand

- the competition will be hot. There are no easy pickings. But the proof is there that competitive and determined Australian businesses do succeed.
- This Centre represents a further important step in focussing Australia's marketing efforts in Japan
 - three years ago Australia opened four consulates throughout Japan to service Japan's regional economies
 - we are now opening for business in the very centre of Tokyo, making access for businessmen and tourists much easier as we approach the Olympics in Sydney in the year 2000.
- This centre also demonstrates the Commonwealth government's determination to work closely with the Australian states to promote Australia abroad.
- I would like to congratulate all the centre's members and wish them well in this important venture.
- It gives me great pleasure to declare the centre open.

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