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## **PRIME MINISTER**

100/95

### **STATEMENT BY THE CHAIRMAN OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP**

#### **TESTING OF A NUCLEAR WEAPON BY FRANCE**

As current Chair of the South Pacific Forum, on behalf of my Forum colleagues I condemn the test of a nuclear weapon by France in the South Pacific.

France has defied the wishes of the people of the South Pacific, the appeal by the Asian nations as expressed in the recent ASEAN Regional Forum statement that called on the nuclear weapon states to bring an immediate end to testing, and the voice of an increasing part of the European and international community. The majority of the French people also oppose France's testing program in the South Pacific.

Of particular concern to the countries of the South Pacific is the French Government's reluctance to fully address the environmental and health risks posed by the testing.

Forum leaders reiterate the calls made by South Pacific Environment Ministers in Brisbane on 17 August for:

- an immediate end to testing of nuclear weapons in the South Pacific and the closing of associated facilities, except those required for future environmental monitoring;
- France to accept full and exclusive responsibility for any adverse impacts from French testing on the South Pacific environment and people; and
- France to provide access to the international community to all French scientific data and to the testing sites themselves to enable an independent and comprehensive assessment of the effects of testing.

Forum countries call on the French Government to acknowledge the weight of opinion against nuclear testing and abandon immediately its testing program in the South Pacific.

Forum leaders will consider nuclear testing issues as part of the South Pacific Forum Meeting in Madang, Papua New Guinea, from 13-15 September.

**CANBERRA**  
**7 September 1995**