



PRIME MINISTER

121/95

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

THE THIRD FRENCH NUCLEAR TEST

I strongly condemn the latest French nuclear test at Mururoa.

This test flies in the face of the French Government's recent announcement that it will sign the Protocols of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone (SPNFZ) Treaty. It further brings into question the sincerity of France's commitment to the security of the region and its environment. The French Government should draw the logical conclusion from its intention to sign the SPNFZ Protocols and end its tests now.

Continued testing has triggered powerful reactions around the world that reinforce the view that security based on nuclear weapons is unsustainable in the longer term. The strength of this opposition adds weight to the Government's decision to pursue practical measures that will lead to a world free of nuclear weapons.

This view will be reinforced in the coming weeks with the United Nations General Assembly scheduled to consider a resolution, in which Australia is playing a leading role, calling for an immediate end to all nuclear testing. France must acknowledge the force of this resolution and the fact that it represents world opinion. To continue testing would be an affront to the wishes of the international community as well as the South Pacific.

France continues to seriously damage its international reputation by its actions in the face of world opinion.

France stands almost alone in not recognising that changed strategic circumstances and changing world opinion mean that a system of security based on nuclear weapons is unsustainable in the longer term.

Until French Government acts responsibly towards the nations of the South Pacific by ending its nuclear testing program we will pursue our comprehensive campaign of action opposing the French decision.

CANBERRA
28 October 1995