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PRIME MINISTER

STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING

ASSASSINATION OF YITZHAK RABIN

I was left incredulous upon learning of the death of Yitzhak Rabin. He was a real leader looking for lasting peace. But apart from the great loss, his death by violence punctures the dream of Jewish people everywhere that Israel is a place of sanctuary, a place where people pay each other due regard and respect, a place where, above all else, human rights and human happiness is the foundation of the society.

This assassin has done more than rob us all of Yitzhak Rabin. He has cheated the Jewish people of the security of these beliefs to which so many people have dedicated themselves.

On behalf of all Australians, I express profound condolences to the family of Mr Rabin and to the Government and people of Israel. I have sent a message of condolence to the acting Prime Minister of Israel, Mr Peres.

Yitzhak Rabin's vision, strength and commitment were instrumental to achieving the breakthrough in the peace process. His death is a tragedy for Israel, the Middle East and the world.

The best way the world can honour Mr Rabin is to push ahead with the work he began. For Australia's part, we will continue to give our full support to the peace process. Our support for Israel's right to exist in security and safety will remain a guiding principle of our policy.

CANBERRA
5 November 1995