



**PRIME MINISTER**

3/96

**STATEMENT BY THE PRIME MINISTER, THE HON P J KEATING MP  
MESSAGE OF CONGRATULATIONS TO THE PRIME MINISTER OF  
GREECE**

I have sent a message of congratulations in the following terms to Mr Constantine Simitis, Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic, on his election to office.

*"May I extend to you personally, and on behalf of the Government and people of Australia, my warmest congratulations on your election as Prime Minister of Greece.*

*Greece itself, and the 300,000 Australians who were born in Greece or are of Greek descent, have played a vital role in shaping the modern Australian nation. They are part of the essence of our society.*

*These deep links between our people provide the firm foundation on which the relationship between our two governments rest. I believe there is more we can do to use these links to develop our relations and I look forward to working closely with you in this task.*

*In this regard, I hope very much that you will find it possible to visit Australia as a guest of the Australian Government at some early time. You would be a very welcome guest here.*

*You have my very best wishes, and those of all Australians, as you continue the process of change and reform on which you have embarked."*

**CANBERRA**  
**25 January 1996**