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PRIME MINISTER

DENG XIAOPING

I have today - on behalf of the Australian Government and people - sent to Premier Li Peng the following message of condolence on the death of Deng Xiaoping:

"One of China's most significant leaders, Deng Xiaoping played a key role in China's modern history. The growing prosperity of China is his enduring legacy. On behalf of the Government and people of Australia, I extend our condolences and sympathy to the Chinese Government and the people of China on his death.

Australia and China have many important interests in common. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my desire to further strengthen our relationship in the future."

Deng Xiaoping was the central force behind the modernisation and opening up of China's economy and in bringing China out of its isolation. He was a motivating force behind the dynamic growth that China has enjoyed in the past 15 years, and that has had a huge impact on China and important consequences for the region and the world.

As I told President Jiang Zemin last year in Manila, Australia remains firmly committed to a strong and mutually beneficial partnership with China. There will be differences but there are also very important common interests and we should build on these.

My visit to China in late March will provide an invaluable opportunity to strengthen the relationship.

20 February 1997



PRIME MINISTER

CANBERRA

My dear Premier

One of China's most significant leaders, Deng Xiaoping played a key role in China's modern history. The growing prosperity of China is his enduring legacy. On behalf of the Government and people of Australia, I extend our condolences and sympathy to the Chinese Government and the people of China on his death.

Australia and China have many important interests in common. I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my desire to further strengthen our relationship in the future.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Howard', with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

(John Howard)

H.E. Mr Li Peng
Premier of the State Council
BEIJING
THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA