



SECRETARIAT  
FOR THE ECONOMY

*The Prefect*

**STATEMENT FROM CARDINAL GEORGE PELL  
FOLLOWING ANNOUNCEMENT OF CHARGES BY VICTORIAN POLICE**

These matters have been under investigation now for nearly two years. There have been leaks to the media, relentless character assassination and, for more than a month, claims that a decision on laying charges is “imminent”.

I am looking forward finally to having my day in court.

I repeat that I am innocent of these charges. They are false. The whole idea of sexual abuse is abhorrent to me.

I have kept Pope Francis regularly informed throughout this lengthy process, and have spoken to him in recent days about the need to take leave to clear my name. I am grateful for his support in granting me this leave to return to Australia. I have spoken to my lawyers about when I need to return home, and to my doctors about how best to do this.

I have been consistent and clear in my total rejection of these allegations. News of these charges strengthens my resolve, and court proceedings now offer me an opportunity to clear my name and then return to my work in Rome.

**Card. George Pell**

Prefect of the Secretariat for the Economy  
Vatican, Rome

29 June 2017

ENDS