

Question on Notice**Date:** 25 March 2021**Time:** 13:13**Asked by:** Senator Eric Abetz

Question: *On page 154 of Budget Estimates 2020/2021, I asked whether it is true that they are building resorts and airports. An answer was not provided then. Could I have that looked at again please? Why was that aspect overlooked?*

Answer:

We understand from publicly available information that a number of infrastructure projects have been undertaken in Maldives in recent years, including bridges, airports and tourism-related infrastructure. These include the ongoing expansion of the Velana International Airport. The Government of the Maldives further announced in 2019 that five new airports would be built. Construction has occurred on a range of outer atolls to support development of the luxury tourism industry.

The Australian Government is not involved in the funding of any major infrastructure projects in Maldives, including resorts or airports.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 14:11

Asked by: Senator Eric Abetz

Question: *Does Australia involve itself doing amicus briefs to courts where there are hearings that might eventuate in an Australian facing the death penalty? Does the suite of options that we entertain in each case involve the possibility of an amicus brief? If so, has that ever been done and how often?*

Answer:

The Government has not, to our knowledge, filed an *amicus curiae* brief in foreign legal proceedings involving Australian nationals facing the death penalty overseas.

- In accordance with international law and the *Consular Services Charter*, the Australian Government provides comprehensive consular support to Australians who may be facing the death penalty overseas, including through high level diplomatic representations to relevant local authorities.
- The standing of Australia to appear as *amicus curiae* [*friend of the court*] in foreign domestic legal proceedings will depend on the practices, procedures and law of the State concerned.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 14:14

Asked by: Senator Eric Abetz

Question: *Religious persecution in Algeria, Mauritania, Somaliland: very concerning the number of notifications received about Christian persecution in these and other countries: what are we doing? Is it too difficult? Are we continuously making representation to these countries, even if we don't have embassy officials there, that we find this completely unacceptable?*

Answer:

Australia has not made direct representations to Somalia on the issue of Christian persecution. As a member of the 'Group of Friends of Somalia Core Group' at the Human Rights Council, in October 2020 Australia supported the resolution to extend the mandate of the 'Independent Expert on the situation of human rights in Somalia'.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 18:55

Asked by: Senator the Hon Eric Abetz, LP, TAS

Question: *With regards to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, has there been any increase in the number of states who have adopted the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism?*

Answer:

As of March 2021, 29 states have adopted the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism, including 23 of IHRA's 34 member states.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 14:20

Asked by: Senator Tim Ayres

Question: *Regarding cost and conduct of the campaign, is it possible to provide on notice an itemised list of costs? When we asked PM&C, beside the \$32k marquee at a function, they indicated other costs were allocated to DFAT.*

Answer:

The final costings for the campaign are not yet available. At 28 February, DFAT had expended approximately **\$113,500** on the campaign.

Item Type	Cost
Travel & Accommodation (includes passports, visas, Covid tests, PPE, transfers, meals & incidentals)	47,136
IT and other Professional Services (includes website design, set up, and security)	48,954
Campaign Launch Event (includes marquee, catering, staff & flowers)	17,411
Total	113,501

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 14:33

Asked by: Senator Tim Ayres

Question: *Is it possible to provide on notice the briefings provided by the department on emissions reductions and energy?*

Answer:

Briefings for Mr Cormann's meetings during the campaign reflect input from across government and contain sensitive information. The material related to emissions was provided by the Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources (DISER). Any requests for this information should be directed to DISER.

Question on Notice**Date:** 25 March 2021**Time:** 14:41**Asked by:** Senator Tim Ayres**Question:** *Did any foreign minister or government official raise climate change at any of Mr Cormann's campaign discussions and meetings? Can you provide a list of countries and dates?***Answer:**

Policies to address climate change are a priority for all OECD members and are prominent on the OECD's agenda. They were discussed throughout the campaign. Mr Cormann had over 200 meetings and calls with OECD member state Leaders, Ministers and senior officials. It is not possible to provide records of Mr Cormann's discussions. These discussions were held in private.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 16:18

Asked by: Senator Mehreen Faruqi, AG, NSW

Question: *Will there be an end of program evaluation for the Australian Middle East NGO Cooperation Agreement Program (AMENCA)?*

Answer: Yes. DFAT will undertake a Final Investment Monitoring Report following the conclusion of AMENCA 3.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 11:01

Asked by: Senator Janet Rice, AG, VIC

Question: *I want to know the details of how that video (a documentary that was positive about the Thai monarchy despite the ongoing process) was made, whether it was done by procurement/contract or in-house by the Embassy? Can you take on notice to give an AusTender number?*

Answer:

The documentary was largely made in house by the Australian Embassy in Bangkok using primarily archival footage. Some procurements were used to assist with aspects of the production. There are no AusTender contract notices for these procurements and this is consistent with the reporting obligations under the Commonwealth Procurement Rules.

Question 2: *Has the government made, in managing that fallout, statements to defend the right to protest? How about public statements?*

Answer:

The Australian Government has not made any public statements in relation to the recent protests in Thailand.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 15:37

Asked by: Senator Janet Rice

Question: *In the period of time when DFAT had Julian Assange's consent, did DFAT attempt to visit Julian Assange to monitor his health and wellbeing rather than writing letters and offering support? Given it was clear Belmarsh Prison had him on suicide watch.*

Answer:

The Australian High Commission in London made consular visits to Mr Assange at HMP Belmarsh twice; on 12 April 2019 and 17 May 2019. He withdrew consent on 13 June 2019.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 15:46

Asked by: Senator Janet Rice

Question: *Could we have on notice the tabling of promotional materials provided to Mr Cormann's campaign, including letters of support from the business community and from past and current members of parliament?*

Answer:

Promotional materials for Mr Cormann's campaign are publicly available on the campaign website, which is at cormannoecd.gov.au. Letters of support were personal correspondence to Mr Cormann and requests for copies should be addressed to him.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 13:44

Asked by: Senator Malcolm Roberts

Question: *I think there are some updates to our laws or requirements that are made automatically if a UN document or protocol is changed. Are you aware of any of those? It may be in the human rights area or the rights of the child area, where changes in UN requirements are automatically fed through and we automatically need to comply with them?*

Answer:

Changes to UN documents or protocols do not cause automatic updates to Australian laws. Where an international instrument is of treaty status – that is, binding on Australia as a matter of international law – as a State Party to the instrument Australia will have the opportunity to take a position on any proposed amendments.

Should the States Parties to the instrument agree to its amendment, Australia will be required to comply with those amendments as a matter of international law.

Any changes to Australian domestic law required to give effect to those amendments must be legislated by Parliament.

Less-than-treaty status instruments are not binding as a matter of international law.

Question on Notice

Date: 25 March 2021

Time: 16.27

Asked by: Senator Dean Smith, LP, WA

Question: *What was the timeframe it took to list those five individuals [those listed under autonomous sanctions regime, sponsored from the findings of the UN fact finding mission]?*

Answer:

On 18 September 2018 the UN Human Rights Council released its full report of the detailed findings of the Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar. The report details serious violations of human rights and of international humanitarian law, committed primarily by Myanmar's military against ethnic minorities.

On 23 October 2018 Foreign Minister Payne released a statement announcing targeted financial sanctions and travel bans against five Myanmar military officers responsible for human rights violations committed by units under their command.

The time it takes to make a new sanctions listing varies, including depending on the availability of credible information to inform the Minister's decision that a person or entity meets the listing criteria. It may also be impacted by broader, whole of government considerations on the most appropriate response, in light of all equities, to a situation of concern.