



# PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

### JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES

Inquiry into three treaty actions

---

Issue date: Monday 8 May 2017

## Gender equality on the front line

Opportunities for women to serve in combat roles within the Australian Defence Forces will be the subject of a public hearing by the Treaties Committee in Canberra on Monday.

The Committee is currently reviewing the [withdrawal of Australia's reservation](#) to the [Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women](#) (CEDAW) concerning women in combat and combat related duties.

As of 1 January 2016, the Government's policy to remove all gender restrictions from the Australian Defence Force combat roles was fully implemented. Women now have equal opportunities to apply and be considered for all ADF positions.

Committee Chair [the Hon Stuart Robert MP](#) explained that the change in defence policy now renders the reservation to the Convention unnecessary.

"Recent changes to the ADF policy mean that Australia's reservation to the Convention dealing with combat duties is no longer necessary," Mr Robert said.

"The Committee's review will include examining the uptake of women in combat roles to date, and the practices of other nations in gender exclusion from such positions."

The Committee will report on the proposed treaty action by 20 June 2017.

On the same day, the Committee will also conduct public hearings on new international trade restrictions of eleven Australian flora and fauna species as well as an agreement that will facilitate Australia's participation in the Generation IV International Forum for the development of next generation nuclear reactor technologies.

**Public Hearing details: 11:10am – 1:00pm, Monday 8 May, Committee Room 1R5, Parliament House, Canberra**



# PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

- 11.10 am [Amendments to Appendices I and II of the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora](#)  
Department of Environment and Energy
- 11.50 am [Women in Combat Duties – CEDAW Reservation Withdrawal](#)  
Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet  
Department of Defence
- 12.30 pm [Generation IV Nuclear Energy Systems - Accession](#)  
Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation
- 1.00 pm *Close*

The hearing will be broadcast live in audio format at [\*\*aph.gov.au/live\*\*](http://aph.gov.au/live).

**Media enquiries:**

Hon Stuart Robert MP, Federal Member for Fadden  
Chair Joint Standing Committee on Treaties  
Contact: Sam O'Connor - 0416 925 981

**For background:**

Joint Standing Committee on Treaties  
(02) 6277 4002, [jsct@aph.gov.au](mailto:jsct@aph.gov.au)