



## Jon Stanhope MLA

CHIEF MINISTER

ATTORNEY GENERAL MINISTER FOR THE ENVIRONMENT  
MINISTER FOR ARTS, HERITAGE & INDIGENOUS AFFAIRS

MEMBER FOR GINNINDERRA

Dr Andrew Southcott MP  
Chair  
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Southcott

Thank you for your letter of 9 August 2005 inviting ACT Government comment on treaties currently under review by the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties.

Your letter invited comment on the following treaties tabled in Parliament on 9 August 2005:

- *Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (Denpasar, 24 February 1976) as amended by the Protocol Amending the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (Manila, 15 December 1987) and the Second Protocol Amending the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (Manila, 25 July 1998), With Exchange of Letters recording interpretation of key provisions (Canberra, 13 July 2005/Vientiane, 23 July 2005)*
- *Supplementary Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Government of the Commonwealth of Australia concerning the Anglo-Australian Optical Telescope, at Siding Spring, New South Wales, Australia*

The ACT Government will not be making any comments to the Committee in relation to the Treaty of Amity.

In relation to the Supplementary Agreement concerning the Anglo-Australian Optical Telescope (AAT) at Siding Spring the ACT Government consulted with the Research School of Astronomy and Astrophysics (RSAA) at the Australian National University (ANU). The Siding Spring Observatory site is owned by the ANU and managed by the RSAA.

During ACT Government consultation with the RSAA it became clear that the RSAA were unaware of the proposed Agreement. I can report that after considering the Agreement the RSAA indicated that it was happy with the thrust of the agreement and urged its immediate implementation.

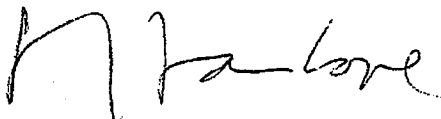
ACTI LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

London Circuit, Canberra ACT 2601 GPO Box 1020, Canberra ACT 2601  
Phone (02) 6205 0104 Fax (02) 6205 0433



While it is pleasing that the RSAA supports the Agreement it is of great concern that it was not consulted during the Agreement negotiations. As managers of the site where the AAT is located, it has a considerable interest in proposed changes to the AAT. Further, the RSAA, as the largest astronomical group in the country, is also the chief Australian user of the AAT. Failing to consult the RSAA is a clear failure in the consultation process for this Agreement and a matter the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties should consider and report on.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Jon Stanhope', written in a cursive style.

Jon Stanhope MLA  
Chief Minister

30 AUG 2005