

Submission No:.....	<u>P</u>
Date Received:.....	<u>17-1-06</u>
Secretary:.....	<u>M. J. [Signature]</u>

Review of decision listing PKK as terrorist organisation

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security,

I wish to comment on the decision to list the Kurdistan Workers Party (PKK) as a terrorist organisation under the Criminal Code Act 1995.

Mr. Ruddock, in his media release on 15 December 2005, justified listing the Kurdistan Workers Party by saying:

"The Government will not tolerate involvement with groups or activities that threaten the safety and security of Australia, and our law enforcement agencies will continue to pursue relentlessly those who commit terrorist offences."

Yet in the security assessment no evidence is produced to support the claim that the safety and security of Australia are threatened.

The security assessment does state:

"The organisation has now ostensibly abandoned the goal of a separate Kurdish state and instead seeks to promote and advance the rights of Kurds living in Turkey, specifically the right to maintain ethnic identity."

The Kurdish people have been subjected to persecution and human rights abuses by Turkey, including torture, extra judicial killings, internal displacement, and suppression of their politics, language and identity. This is acknowledged by the Australian Government. Banning the PKK under the Criminal Code could criminalise nonviolence activity, such as writing an article in support of Kurdish self-determination or attending a demonstration calling for a fair trial of gaoled Kurdish leaders, because of the vagueness of the definitions in the Act. Banning the PKK will also adversely affect the status of refugees and asylum seekers with pro-Kurdish views.

Violent crimes, such as murder, kidnapping, bombing, and the planning for such crimes, are already illegal under Australian law.

For the above reasons the listing of the Kurdistan Workers Party should be opposed.

Sincerely,

George Dale Hess

19/01/2006