



## Review of Sentenced Persons Transfer Agreement with Hong Kong

The Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, chaired by Mrs Margaret May MP, will hold a public hearing on Monday 5 December to examine an Agreement concerning the transfer of sentenced persons with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of the People's Republic of China.

The Agreement allows a sentenced person to serve out their sentence in the prison of the other Party provided they have community ties to that country. Sentenced persons may be transferred if they, the Australian Government and the Hong Kong Government all give their informed consent. Where the prisoner was sentenced under the laws of an Australian State or Territory, the State or Territory government enforcing the sentence must also agree to the transfer.

To be eligible, the prisoner's sentence must be final and not subject to any appeal, the prisoners must have a right to reside in the receiving jurisdiction and the prisoner must have at least one year of their sentence remaining, although this final requirement can be waived by agreement of both Governments.

"The Agreement is expected to provide a number of benefits for Australia including relieving the hardship and burden on relatives of prisoners. The Committee will examine the potential benefits of the Agreement and determine whether it is in Australia's interest to ratify the treaty," Mrs May said.

The Committee will also hear evidence in relation to four other treaties: Amendments to the Statute of the Hague Conference on International Law, Protocol and Amendments to the Universal Postal Union, Annex G: Settlement Disputes to the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants, and a Reciprocal Promotion and Protection of Investments Agreement with Turkey.

The public hearing will be held in **Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra** on **Monday, 5 December 2005** from **10.00 am** and broadcast on the House Monitoring Service on Channel 10, radio frequency 98.3MHz and on the Parliament House website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/live/webcast3.asp#>

Further information about the inquiry and a copy of the public hearing program is available on the Committee's website: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/29november2005/tor.htm>

### MEDIA CONTACTS

<b>Media contact:</b>	<b>Krystyna Homik (Mrs May's Office)</b>	<b>0408 739 273</b>
<b>Background:</b>	<b>Gillian Gould (Committee Secretary)</b>	<b>(02) 6277 4642</b>