



THE HON STEPHEN SMITH MP

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

10 OCT 2008

Mrs Julia Irwin MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Julia'.

Dear Mrs Irwin

Thank you for your letter dated 4 September 2008 conveying the terms of a petition about the murder of an Australian citizen, Mr Renerio Arrogante III, in the Philippines.

I acknowledge the anguish this matter has caused to the family of Mr Arrogante and others close to him and sympathise with their desire for justice. While the Australian Government has no authority to intervene in a criminal investigation or prosecution in the Philippines, the Australian Embassy in Manila has written to the Philippines National Bureau of Investigation, the high-level body overseeing the investigation, to demonstrate the Australian Government's strong interest in the case.

The Arrogante family should be assured that, at my request, the Embassy will continue to take a close interest in the investigation of Mr Arrogante's murder and the eventual trial of those considered accountable for it.

Yours sincerely

Stephen Smith