

SUBMISSION NO. 1
TT on 8 May 2012

Dear Treaty Committee,

As long-term Darwin residents, we are concerned that our nation's sovereignty is threatened by military agreements with the United States of America that speak of joint cooperation on Australian soil. Americans are guests in our country not hosts - or even joint hosts. Australian law should be all that is required while Americans visit Australia.

The CDSLTA appears to be a cautionary document that balances Australian trade interests in defence logistics with those of the U.S. As with SOFA, however, we do not see that Australia is in an equal position to the U.S. - either in a trading or military capacity. We are not exactly trading (equal) partners as regards military expenditure or logistics and we do not like to see our leaders defer and conciliate rather than speak out strongly and negotiate equitably on behalf of our proud and independent nation.

Already Australia is attempting to recruit foreign defence contractors and workers - in Texas and elsewhere in the U.S. This hardly shows respect for local business people and workers interested in being trained and supported to assist the ADF in its cooperative logistics on Australian soil.

We also note that we have no wars in Australia and we should not be agreeing to treaties which place the U.S war machine strongly against Australian interests on Australian soil.

Please note: Darwin is not a defence town. While there has always been an Australian defence presence, in earlier days there was a far more peaceful interaction between all citizens. Darwin has a diverse, mixed demographic and has always been relaxed in its attitude to the world around it. We do not like to see the violence of international tensions invade our laid-back sense of place and identity.

As peaceful residents of the NT, we ask that any treaty agreed upon with other nations - and especially the United States of America - respect the Australian national identity and spirit of fairness and equity - not displace it with an inequitable and disrespectful war mentality.

Respectfully,

Greg Chapman and Diana Rickard

15 June 2012