

351/894



THE HON KEVIN RUDD MP

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
CANBERRA

The Hon John Murphy MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

13 SEP 2011

Dear Mr Murphy

I refer to your letter of 25 August 2011 regarding a petition about allegations of genocide against the Republic of Turkey, submitted for the consideration of the Standing Committee on Petitions.

I note that the petition, inter alia, asks the House to outline whether it supports any allegations of genocide against the Republic of Turkey and its predecessor, the Ottoman Empire.

The Committee may wish to know that the Australian Government acknowledges the mass killings and deportations at the end of the Ottoman Empire, and the devastating effect these events have had on subsequent generations, their identity, heritage and culture. The Government also understands the deeply-held feelings in various Australian communities in relation to this period of history.

While the Government respects these feelings, it nevertheless strongly believes that dialogue between the governments and communities of the countries concerned is the best way to address such issues, and does not intervene in this historical dispute.

I trust that this information will be of assistance to the Committee in its consideration of the petition.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Rudd