



**THE COMMONWEALTH PARLIAMENT**  
**JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES**  
**STATEMENT FROM COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN**  
**KERRY BARTLETT MP**

**THE KYOTO PROTOCOL ON CLIMATE CHANGE**  
**STATUS OF THE INQUIRY**

The Joint Standing Committee on Treaties will not complete its inquiry into the Kyoto Protocol to United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change before the Federal election later this year.

We began our inquiry in June 2000 and we have gathered a substantial body of evidence on the question of whether or not it would be in Australia's interest to ratify the Protocol.

However, as stated in a discussion paper we released in April 2001:

... there are many difficult issues associated with the design, scope and implementation of the Protocol that have yet to be resolved. Until these issues are resolved it will not be possible to predict accurately the domestic impact of the emissions targets specified in the Protocol.

While an international consensus was forged on some issues at the Conference of Parties held in Bonn in July 2001, many significant and complex issues remain unresolved. Indeed, there is now renewed international debate about whether the Kyoto Protocol is the best means of advancing consideration of these issues.

Accordingly, most Committee members are still of view, as expressed in our discussion paper, that it would be imprudent to provide definitive advice to Parliament on whether Australia should ratify the Protocol.

We recommend instead that the Treaties Committee established in the new Parliament continue to monitor national and international developments in this area.

By continuing to seek expert advice and conduct public hearings, the Committee will be well placed to oversee the development of negotiating positions developed by the Government and to advise Parliament on whether Australia should take treaty action to tackling the problems associated with climate change.

Canberra  
27 September 2001

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