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SENATOR THE HON BOB CARR

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
CANBERRA

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

17 APR 2013

Dear Mr Murphy

I refer to your letter of February 6, 2013, regarding the petition presented to the House Standing Committee on Petitions requesting Australia support the Palestinian resolution seeking Non-Member Observer State status in the United Nations General Assembly.

As you would now be aware, Australia abstained on the resolution. The Australian Government's decision balanced our long-standing support for the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and their own state, with our view that the only durable basis for resolution of this conflict is direct negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians. The Government continues to urge both sides to resume negotiations to this end.

The Government will continue to make a tangible contribution to the peace process through practical support for Palestinian efforts to build the economic and institutional basis for statehood. Australia will deliver more than \$300 million over five years (2011-2016) in development and humanitarian assistance, including \$120 million in direct budget support to the Palestinian Authority.

Thank you for bringing the petition to my attention. I trust that this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Bob Carr