



Public hearing on cluster munitions and on prisoner transfers with Vietnam.

Federal Parliament's Treaties Committee will hold a public hearing in Canberra on Monday 22 June to consider ratification by Australia of two treaties:

- the *Agreement between Australia and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam concerning the Transfer of Sentenced Persons*; and
- the *Convention on Cluster Munitions*.

The prisoner-transfer Agreement with Vietnam permits Australians imprisoned in Vietnam, and Vietnamese nationals imprisoned in Australia, to apply to serve the remainder of their sentences in their home country. The Agreement is the latest in a number of prisoner-transfer agreements to be concluded with Australia's regional neighbours under the Government's International Transfer of Prisoners Scheme. The Committee will take evidence on the prisoner-transfer Agreement from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and the Attorney General's Department.

In addition, the Committee will conduct its second hearing on the *Convention on Cluster Munitions*, a treaty aimed at eliminating these munitions. Unexploded cluster munitions can kill or maim civilians and can deny civilians the use of economically-important land. Over 11,000 casualties have been attributed to cluster munitions, 98 per cent of which were civilians. The majority of these casualties occurred while people were carrying out daily livelihood activities such as farming.

The Convention bans the use, stockpiling, acquisition and transfer of cluster munitions. The Convention also aims to provide international aid to the victims of cluster munitions and includes provisions on the clearance of cluster munitions from former areas of conflict. Witnesses will be from the Department of Defence and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

PUBLIC HEARING PROGRAM

10.00am – 11.25am, Monday, 22 June 2009

Venue: Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra

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| 10.00am | Agreement between Australia and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam concerning the Transfer of Sentenced Persons |
| 10:40am | Convention on Cluster Munitions |

This hearing will be broadcast live on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

Further information is available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/jsct

MEDIA CONTACTS

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