



Treaties Committee supports Mutual Assistance Treaties with Malaysia and China

Federal Parliament’s Treaties Committee has given the green light for Australia to ratify treaties with Malaysia and China on mutual assistance in criminal matters. The committee has also supported an extradition treaty with Malaysia.

The Committee’s support for the treaties was announced by Chair Dr Andrew Southcott when tabling the Committee’s 79th and 80th reports in federal parliament today.

The mutual assistance treaties create a formal process enabling Australia and Malaysia and Australia and China to assist each other in investigations, prosecutions and proceedings related to criminal matters, including terrorism, drug trafficking, fraud, money laundering and people trafficking.

As both Malaysia and China retain the death penalty for a number of offences, the treaty contains safeguards to ensure that mutual assistance requests do not result in the imposition of the death penalty.

“The obligation to provide mutual assistance is limited by a number of internationally accepted grounds for refusal. These grounds are well recognised and are already reflected in Australia’s domestic laws,” Dr Southcott said.

In Report 79, the Committee also supported eight other agreements:

- with France and Norway for the avoidance of double taxation;
- with China and Japan for the protection of migratory birds;
- with India and China relating to air services,
- Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War; and
- HS2007 amendments to the Australia-United States Free Trade Agreement Annexes.

In Report 80, the Committee also supported changes to the Rules of Origin of Australia – New Zealand Closer Economic Relations Trade Agreement (ANZCERTA).

Reports 79 and 80 are both available on the Committee’s website: www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4002.

MEDIA CONTACTS

Media contacts:	Wayne Arbon	(Dr Southcott’s Office)	(02) 6277 4283 or 0433 311 525
	Michael Watts	(Mr Wilkie’s Office)	(02) 6277 2255 or 0419 993 677
Background:	James Rees	(Committee Secretary)	(02) 6277 4642