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Committee Secretary,  
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs,  
Defence and Trade,  
Parliament House,  
Canberra. ACT 2600

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2<sup>nd</sup> July, 2002

Dear Sir,

I understand that the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade will be undertaking an annual program of public hearings on Australia's activities at the United Nations (UN), and that any comments on this relationship with the UN should be put in writing by 12<sup>th</sup> July 2002.

I would point out that the general public are now much more aware of the UN's failings. Groups are forming everywhere in Australia on an informal basis and discussing information gathered about the UN and other international organisations which are considered to be a danger to our sovereignty.

There is alarm over who the government is listening to. I understand that non-government organizations and other groups send in submissions. Who are these groups? What authority do they have to speak for the Australian people? When groups such as Amnesty International are involved do they list their members names and addresses? Are they in fact Australians? Do they simply hide behind some organisation that could be dominated by big business or foreign interests? Democracy, we were all taught at school is government by the people for the people. As for Australia's treaty obligations - did the people of Australia ever vote to say that its government should delegate their responsibility to the UN?

I understand that at the hearing to be held in July 2002 representatives of government agencies will provide an overview of current UN priorities, information on the costs and benefits of Australia's participation in the UN and more. It is all so upbeat, such as "benefits" or advantages but no mention of disadvantages. Where is the balance? Also who are these government agencies?

The public are only just waking up the extent of Australia's involvement in the UN. Mary Robinson was hardly adept at keeping the peace in her own country and many Australians think that as a representative of the UN she was completely out of line in telling Australia how to run its affairs.

I think the Australian public is beginning to see through the secret curtain to UN activities, and unless the Joint Standing Committee starts making certain the public receives some unadulterated answers to the questions being asked, and not being put



down by "the extent of community misunderstanding" statements, the public is most likely to demand withdrawal from the UN.

But then why wouldn't they demand withdrawal? We see our homeless numbers increasing and disintegration of the Australian family. The Cairns Post 10/6/00 quoted the words of a youth care worker on the increase in the number of teenage mums and their babies living on the streets of Cairns.

All the money being poured into the UN and its various organisations does not appear to be having any effect. Worldwide the poor are getting poorer and the number of people starving to death is rapidly increasing and wars are raging while the UN shuffles paper.

Just consider the erratic findings of the United Nations committee on the elimination of racial discrimination (CERD) which insisted that China, Russia and Cuba have a better record than Australia.

Ros Kelly signed away Australia's water rights under the UN's Agenda 21 at Rio de Janeiro in 1992. The second World Water Forum in the Hague was officially sponsored by the UN and the World Bank. It was openly dominated by huge water and food corporations to promote acceptance of corporate control of the world's water. More recently, The General Agreement on Trade in Services being negotiated by the WTO also has an interest in water. Everything involving unelected international organisations seems to have a back up scheme.

The Earth Charter document is on the agenda at the UN's World Summit in Johannesburg in September. The Australian National Earth Charter Steering Committee is comprised of 'innovative partnerships' between environmental NGOs, social justice organizations, business and industry. None of these organizations have been democratically elected to represent Australia. Whether their concern for the environment is genuine or opportunistic is the question. Chair of the Rockefeller Brothers Fund, Steven Rockefeller drafted the Earth Charter and Mikhail Gorbachev assisted. When in power, Mikhail Gorbachev was considered by many to be an environmental vandal. I understand this charter promotes a single global community and a call for all nations to surrender their sovereignty to the UN, which is a major concern.

There has been far too little information available to the public who are now calling for regular scrutiny and debate on Australia's obligations to foreign unelected organisations – not to mention "Australia's Role in United Nations Reform". Many are suggesting that the UN may be past reform.

Yours sincerely,

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