



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

05 JUL 2013

Dear Mr Murphy

I refer to your letter of June 17, 2013, informing me of a petition regarding alleged media freedom and human rights violations in Bangladesh.

The Australian Government is deeply concerned at the loss of life, injuries and damage suffered in confrontations and demonstrations during recent political violence in Bangladesh. We raised Australia's concerns at Bangladesh's most recent Universal Periodic Review in the United Nations Human Rights Council on April 29, 2013. The Australian statement can be found at <http://www.geneva.mission.gov.au/gene/statement455.html>.

We also continue to make representations to a range of government and opposition interlocutors and actively encourage all sides to exercise and advocate restraint, tolerance and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is especially important that all sides do this in the lead-up to Bangladesh's scheduled national elections.

The Australian High Commission will continue to monitor the situation in Dhaka.

I have noted the petition and passed it to the relevant area in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade for information. Doing so does not connote agreement with the judgment or conclusions in the petition.

Thank you for bringing this matter to my attention.

Yours sincerely

Bob Carr