



JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, DEFENCE AND TRADE
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Australia's Human Rights Dialogues Process

Public Hearing:
09:00am – 12:00pm
14 March 2005

Committee Room 1R3
Parliament House, Canberra

MEDIA RELEASE

Issued: 10 March 2005

The Human Rights Sub-Committee, of the Joint Standing Committee of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, is holding a public hearing on Australia's Human Rights Dialogue Process on 14 March 2005 in 1R3 at Parliament House.

In 1997, the Australian Government initiated a high level bilateral dialogue on human rights with China. Similar formal talks commenced with Vietnam in May 2002 and with Iran in December 2002.

The aim of the dialogues is to hold frank and constructive discussions to demonstrate the commitment of both countries to the talks and the overall strength of their bilateral ties with Australia.

The Committee, chaired by Senator Marise Payne, will examine Australia's Human Rights Dialogue Process, with particular reference to:

- parliamentary participation and oversight;
- involvement of non-government organisations;
- the roles and obligations of participating agencies;
- reporting requirements and mechanisms; and
- the monitoring and evaluation of outcomes.

At the hearing, the Committee will take evidence from a range of Commonwealth agencies. These include the Department of Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade, the Attorney-General's Department, the Australian Agency for International Development, and the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

From the non-government sector, the Committee will hear from the Australian Council for International Development and Amnesty International Australia.

For media inquiries, contact the sub-committee Chair, Senator Marise Payne on (02) 9893 5151 (electorate) or (02) 6277 3810 (Parliament)

For all other inquiries, contact the Secretary on 02 6277 4624 or visit the inquiry website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt/hrdialogue/hrindex.htm