



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

**Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
Human Rights Sub Committee**

MEDIA RELEASE
Issued: 23 June 2011

*Chair: Hon Laurie Ferguson MP
Deputy: Hon Philip Ruddock MP*

Human rights talks in the spotlight

The impact of nearly 15 years of human rights dialogues with China and Vietnam will be examined as part of the parliamentary review of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade's 2009-10 annual report.

"Australia's human rights dialogue process is now well-established with 13 rounds of talks between Australia and China and eight between Australia and Vietnam since 1997," Human Rights Sub-Committee chair Laurie Ferguson said. "This inquiry is a chance to examine the effectiveness of the dialogue process to date".

The focus of the Committee will be on:

- parliamentary participation and oversight;
- involvement of non-government organisations;
- the roles and obligations of participating agencies;
- reporting requirements and mechanisms;
- the monitoring and evaluation of outcomes including an assessment of whether any human rights reforms within those countries have been obtained;
- whether this dialogue mechanism should be adopted with other countries;
- exploring options for alternative human rights mechanisms.

The committee is keen to hear from non government organisations, peak associations, academia, government departments and individuals. The committee will accept submissions, preferably by email, until Friday, 5 August 2011.

Further details about the inquiry, including how to make a submission, can be obtained from the committee's website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt> or by contacting the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313 or emailing jscfadt@aph.gov.au.

For media comment: please contact the Sub-Committee Chair, the Hon Laurie Ferguson MP on (02) 6621 9909 (Electorate Office) or (02) 6277 4323 (Parliament House)

For further information: please contact the Committee secretariat on (02) 6277 2313, via email at jscfadt@aph.gov.au or visit the inquiry website at: <http://www.aph.gov.au/jfadt>