



Public hearing on treaties on the elimination of discrimination against women and defence cooperation with France

On Monday 15 September, the Federal Parliament's Treaties Committee will hear evidence on three treaties tabled on 26 August 2008 including the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

The Optional Protocol to CEDAW will provide the opportunity for Australians to make a complaint to an expert United Nations committee about discrimination against women in political and public life, education, marriage, social security, health and employment, once they have exhausted all domestic legal avenues.

The federal government considers the Optional Protocol will demonstrate Australia's strong commitment to both promoting the elimination of discrimination against women and addressing global challenges such as the protection of human rights.

An Australian Defence Cooperation and Status of Forces Agreement with France will enhance our overall defence relationship with France by facilitating a range of defence cooperative activities. It will establish standard conditions for the presence of Australian and French visiting forces on issues including legal jurisdiction, legal claims, immigration requirements, customs duties, communications and the carriage of arms.

The Committee will also consider an agreement with the European Community on certain aspects of air services. This agreement addresses inconsistencies between EC law and Australia's existing bilateral air services agreements with 14 individual EU Member States. The Government believes that by locking-in the benefits of Australia's bilateral air services agreements with EU Member States, the agreement forms the basis of future discussions on a single EU-wide air services agreement.

The content of the agreement has received positive support from industry, including Qantas, Virgin Blue and Sydney Airport.

PUBLIC HEARING PROGRAM 10.00 am-11.30 pm, Monday, 15 September 2008

Venue: Committee Room 2R1, 2nd floor, Parliament House, Canberra

- 10:00am** **Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women;**
- 10:30am** **Agreement with the European Union on Certain Aspects of Air Services;**
- 11:00am** **Agreement with the French Republic Regarding Defence Cooperation and Status of Forces**

The public hearing will be broadcast on the House Monitoring Service, radio and webcast live on the Parliament House website at: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>.

Further information is available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/jsct

MEDIA CONTACTS

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