



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

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

MEDIA RELEASE
Issued: February 2009

*Chair: Senator Michael Forshaw
Sub-Comm. Chair: Ms Kerry Rea MP*

Human rights in our neighbourhood: Public hearing in Sydney

The parliamentary Human Rights Sub-Committee is heading to Sydney on Wednesday, 18 February 2009 to meet with human rights groups to discuss protecting human rights in Asia and the Pacific.

The absence of a regional mechanism in the Asia-Pacific to prevent and redress human rights violations makes this area a natural focus for the Committee's examination of human rights mechanisms.

Sub-Committee Chair, Ms Kerry Rea MP said, "Whether or not the region is currently ready, willing or able to set up such a framework, it is worthwhile to look at what is happening in our region. It is useful to look at what protections are in place to assist people whose human rights are being violated, and what part Australia can play in offering support to our neighbours as they strive to address human rights situations".

**Wednesday, 18 February 2009
10.00 am to 3.30 pm
The Jubilee Room
Parliament House, Macquarie St, SYDNEY**

The Sub-Committee will meet with the:

- **Australian Human Rights Centre;**
- **Pacific Regional Rights Resource Team;**
- **Asia Pacific Forum;**
- **Sydney Centre for International Law;**
- **Australian Human Rights Commission; and**
- **Human Rights Council of Australia.**

Members of the public are welcome to attend. For a program and more details, visit the Committee's website: http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfadt/asia_pacific_hr/index.htm.

There is still an opportunity to contribute to this inquiry, as the Committee will continue to accept submissions.

For media queries, contact the Sub-Committee Chair, Kerry Rea MP on 07 3893 3488.

For all other queries, contact the Sub-Committee Secretary, Samantha Mannette, on 02 6277 2313 or jscfadt@aph.gov.au.