



Amendment will enable the sale of cheaper drugs to developing countries

A proposed amendment to the World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) will make it easier for developing countries to obtain cheaper versions of patented medicines needed to address public health problems. The TRIPS Agreement is one of the WTO agreements constituting the integrated WTO system of trade rules.

In addition to government representatives, the Committee will also hear from Dr Matthew Rimmer from the Australian National University who questions the effectiveness of the proposed amendment. He argues that the same amendment, agreed to as an interim measure in 2003 by the WTO, has so far not resulted in greater access to important drugs.

The public hearing will be held in **Committee Room 2R1, Parliament House, Canberra on Friday 22 June 2007 from 9.00 am**. 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: <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm>

PUBLIC HEARING PROGRAM – 9.00 am-12.15 pm, 22 June 2007

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

9.00 am	HS2007 Amendments to the Singapore Free Trade Agreement
9.10 am	Protocol amending the World Trade Organization Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS);
10.00 am	Agreement between Australia and Turkey on Cooperation in Military Fields
10.25 am	Protocol III (the Red Crystal) to the Geneva Conventions – Red Cross Representatives;
10.50 am	Agreements with Antigua and Barbuda and the Netherlands Antilles for Exchange of Information with respect to taxes;
11.10 am	Agreement on Operational and Strategic Cooperation between Australia and the European Police Office (EUROPOL)
11.30 am	Agreement on Health Care Insurance between Australia and the Kingdom of Belgium
11.45 am	Extension of the Agreement between Australia and the World Intellectual Property Organisation in relation to the functioning of the Australian Patent Office as an International Searching Authority and International Preliminary Examining Authority under the Patent Cooperation Treaty
12.00 pm	International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships Ballast Water

MEDIA CONTACTS

Media contact:	Dr Southcott's Office (David Colmer)	(02) 6277 4283 or 0412 550 946
	John Delany (Mr Kim Wilkie's Office)	(02) 6277 2255 or 0419 993 677
Background:	James Rees (Committee Secretary)	(02) 6277 4642