



JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES

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MEDIA RELEASE

**Treaties Committee supports treaty action that enables
Australia to attend the East Asia Summit**

Mrs Margaret May MP, Acting Chair, Joint Standing Committee on Treaties today tabled *Report 68*, which includes a recommendation that Australia ratify the Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC), which will enable Australia to attend the East Asia Summit.

The East Asia Summit was established in November 2004 by ASEAN States in addition to China, Japan and South Korea and is expected to canvas a range of economic and political issues relevant to the region.

The Committee heard evidence that TAC will not affect Australia's relationship with States outside Southeast Asia and its obligations under other bilateral or multilateral agreements such as the ANZUS Treaty and the Five Power Defence Arrangements. The first meeting of the East Asia Summit will be held in Kuala Lumpur in December 2005.

'Attendance at the East Asia Summit will provide Australia with an opportunity to strengthen ties with ASEAN Member States and participate in a new forum of debate on issues that affect the region,' Mrs May said.

In addition to the above treaty action, *Report 68: Treaties tabled on 7 December 2004 (5) and 9 August 2005* outlines the Committee's review and recommendation that binding treaty action be taken in relation to the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and a Supplementary Agreement with the United Kingdom on the Anglo-Australian Optical Telescope.

Report 68 is available on the Committee's website:

<http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/report.htm>

or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4002.

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