

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 21 OCTOBER 2008

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(44) Output 1.4: Compliance

Senator Hanson-Young (L&CA 83) asked:

In relation to people trafficking, how does this fit into our obligations under CEDAW and other similar types of conventions where we could be providing people with protection first and foremost as to their humanitarian needs as opposed to simply because they are participating in a prosecution?

Answer:

The Government is committed to fulfilling its international obligations to protect women from exploitation and to criminalise and eliminate people trafficking, especially trafficking in women and children. Since Australia's last report on CEDAW in 2003, the Australian and state and territory governments have taken a number of important steps to reinforce, expand and better coordinate efforts across the country and the region to combat trafficking crimes and exploitation. These measures fulfil Australia's obligations against Article 6 of CEDAW, to suppress trafficking, exploitation and prostitution of women.

The Government's anti-trafficking strategy addresses the full trafficking cycle, from recruitment to reintegration, and gives equal weight to the critical areas of prevention, detection and investigation, prosecution, and victim support.

Under the Government's strategy a comprehensive range of support services is provided for suspected trafficking victims who are able and willing to help in a criminal investigation or prosecution. The Support for Victims of People Trafficking Program has supported victims trafficked into Australia for the sex industry and for labour servitude. The Program provides initial intensive support of up to 30 days which is not limited to victims who are participating in a prosecution. Among other functions, this phase of support allows victims of trafficking to consider whether or not to participate in a prosecution.