

QUESTION TAKEN ON NOTICE

SUPPLEMENTARY BUDGET ESTIMATES HEARING: 17 OCTOBER 2011

IMMIGRATION AND CITIZENSHIP PORTFOLIO

(SE11/0204) Program 2.1: Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance

Senator Cash asked:

Did the Malaysian Government indicate it would change its laws or ratify any international conventions to specifically provide protection to refugees and asylum seekers sent to Malaysia as a result of the people swap arrangement?

Answer:

The Government of Malaysia demonstrated a strong willingness to ensure the protection of transferees. In addition, the Arrangement was developed in close consultation with the UNHCR to ensure every person transferred to Malaysia would be treated in accordance with internationally recognised human rights standards. Minister Hishammuddin stated publicly that Malaysia would ensure those protections were upheld. There is no reason to believe that the public commitments made by the Malaysian Government would not be honoured.