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 MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS

THE HON ALEXANDER DOWNER MP

PARLIAMENT HOUSE
 CANBERRA ACT 2600

07 JAN 1997

The Rt Hon Ian Sinclair MP
 Chairman
 Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs,
 Defence and Trade
 Parliament House
 CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear *Ian*

I should like to thank you for convening the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade (JSCFADT) seminar on the Australian aid program on 31 July. I am aware that the report on proceedings of the seminar was tabled in both houses of Parliament on Monday 16 September, including a list of the committee's recommendations.

The recommendations of the JSCFADT report cover issues which are being considered by the Simons Review of the Australian aid program. I believe these issues are best dealt with in the context of the Simons Review. The Prime Minister, the Hon John Howard MP, has agreed to my recommendation that the Government respond to the report of the Committee by referring the report and its list of recommendations to the Simons Review. I have accordingly written to Mr Simons asking that he and his colleagues take account of the JSCFADT recommendations in the context of their review of the aid program

Yours sincerely

Alexander Downer