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Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee

Topic: FADT References Committee - Democracy and Human Rights in Myanmar - Spoken QoN - Public Hearing
13Feb26

Senator Dean Smith

Question

Senator DEAN SMITH: Thank you. In a line of questioning I pursued earlier, I identified a Reuters report that detailed cooperation between the Iranian regime and the Burmese regime in regard to the existence of two vessels importing aviation fuel into Myanmar. One of those vessels is sanctioned. Based on my inquiry, I can't see a sanction on the second one. Take it on notice if necessary—and perhaps what we might pursue as a next step as a committee more generally is to seek a more detailed but private discussion briefing with the department about the sanctions regime. Finally, (1) could you just provide to us details of how the government is engaging with Myanmar's neighbours India and Bangladesh in order to try to facilitate an alternative in addition to the ASEAN mechanism. I might just leave it at that. Thank you very much for your continued cooperation and attention to these matters, which are top of mind for many Australians but not least, of course, for those of Burmese heritage in our country.

Ms Smith: Of course. Thank you, Senator. I take those questions on notice.

Answer

Australia designated NOBLE as part of a package targeting vessels assisting Russia profit from oil exports. REEF was not assessed by Australia to be one of these vessels transporting Russian oil. We keep our sanctions towards Myanmar under regular review.

The Australian Government regularly raises Myanmar with neighbouring countries in the region, including bilaterally and in multilateral and regional settings. We work in concert with other countries to maintain attention on the political and humanitarian crisis. We continue to strongly support ASEAN-led efforts to resolve the crisis in Myanmar, including the work of the ASEAN Chair and Special Envoy, consistent with the ASEAN Five-Point Consensus.

The Australian Government continues to use every lever at our disposal – bilaterally, regionally and multilaterally – to press the regime for the cessation of violence, the release of those unjustly detained, unimpeded humanitarian access and a return to the path of democracy.