



# PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

## MEDIA RELEASE

### **Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security**

Review of the listing of Al-Shabaab, Hamas' Izz al-Din al-Qassam Brigades, Kurdistan Workers' Party, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba, and Palestinian Islamic Jihad under the *Criminal Code*

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## **Intelligence Committee supports re-listing of terrorist organisations**

Parliament's [Intelligence and Security Committee](#) has tabled a report today supporting the Government's re-listing of five organisations, including the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), as 'terrorist organisations' under the *Criminal Code*.

The listings make it a criminal offence to direct the activities of, become a member of, recruit for, train or receive training from, get funds to, from or for, provide support to or associate with members of the organisations.

The Committee was satisfied that each of the groups—which also included Al-Shabaab, Hamas' Izz al-Din al Qassam Brigades, Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Palestinian Islamic Jihad—continued to engage in terrorist acts and found no reason for the instruments to be disallowed.

For the PKK, the Committee sought additional information from government agencies and conducted a public hearing with representative community groups to assist its consideration of the group's re-listing.

Mr Andrew Hastie MP, Chair of the Committee said, 'the Committee has some sympathy with the views expressed by stakeholders that the Kurdish communities' conception of the PKK is intertwined with complex notions of Kurdish identity, culture and political aspirations. This broader conception of the PKK has given rise to some concerns that engaging in general discourse in support of Kurdish autonomy and cultural rights could fall within the ambit of criminal offences'.

'Although the Committee remains satisfied that the PKK continues to meet the legislative test of a terrorist organisation, the Committee is of the view that more needs to be done to provide reassurance to the Kurdish communities that exercising their political rights and freedoms in advocating for Kurdish autonomy and cultural rights does not, in itself, constitute a terrorist offence', Mr Hastie said.

The Committee has recommended that agencies,

- further engage with Kurdish communities about the impact of the listing and the types of conduct it may apply to;
- consider the application of international humanitarian law in circumstances of international and non-international armed conflicts, and
- provide the Committee with a regional briefing within 18 months on the matters relating to the PKK listing.



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The Committee also presented today its *Annual Report of Committee Activities for 2017–18*. The reporting period saw significant activity by the Committee amid a national focus on counter-interference measures.

Copies of the two reports can be accessed via the Committee's website at [www.aph.gov.au/pjcis](http://www.aph.gov.au/pjcis).

**Media enquiries:**

Chair, Mr Andrew Hastie MP (Canning, WA) on 08 9534 8044 (Electorate office) or (02) 6277 4223 (Parliament House)

**For background information:**

Committee Secretariat - Parliamentary Joint Committee on Intelligence and Security –  
(02) 6277 2360

[pjcis@aph.gov.au](mailto:pjcis@aph.gov.au)

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