



PARLIAMENT of AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES

Report tabled

Issue date: 9 May 2017

Welfare agreement across the Ditch

The [Joint Standing Committee on Treaties](#) tabled its 170th report today, approving the text of four separate agreements, including a [social security agreement with New Zealand](#).

The social security agreement with New Zealand will provide continued access to specified income support payments for people who live between Australia and New Zealand. It incorporates revisions to an existing agreement which better align the Agreement with domestic legislation in both countries.

The Chair of the Committee, [the Hon Stuart Robert MP](#), said Australia had a long history of social security agreements with New Zealand, the first signed in 1944, and it was great to enhance the existing relations between the countries.

“The Agreement overcomes barriers to welfare payments including the Disability Support Pension, which Australians would otherwise be ineligible to access,” Mr Robert said.

The Committee’s report concludes the Agreement is in the national interest and affirms the important role freedom of movement and labour has between Australia and New Zealand in the development of closer economic relations.

Report 170 reviewed three other treaties including:

- [Nuclear Research Co-operation Agreement](#), which facilitates Australian cooperation with 21 regional countries on nuclear research and technology.
- [Loan Agreement – International Monetary Fund](#), which aims to provide the International Monetary Fund (IMF) with an extra revenue stream through a loan of up to \$8.3 billion from Australia, if the IMF’s reserves fall below a specified amount and several other conditions are met.
- [Harmonization of Wheeled Vehicles - Revision](#), which provides a streamlined framework for countries to accept and adopt UN regulations that establish international safety standards for wheeled vehicles.

The Committee’s report (Report 170) is available [online](#).

About the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties

The Committee is responsible for advising the Parliament of whether proposed treaties are in Australia’s national interest, and identify possible issues, particularly with implementation, that must be addressed.



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The Committee hears and receives evidence from both departments and the community to get a broad range of views of the potential impact of proposed international agreements.

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