



## Treaties report on Australia's cultural industries and trade in wine with the European Community

The Chair of the Parliament's Treaties Committee, Kelvin Thomson MP, last night released *Report 101: Treaties tabled 3 February 2009* which reviews two proposed treaty actions:

- the *Agreement between Australia and the European Community on Trade in Wine*; and
- the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*

The Committee recommends that binding treaty action be taken on both treaties.

The *Agreement between Australia and the European Community on Trade in Wine* will require Australia and the European Community to accept a range of wine labelling restrictions based on the production and geographical origin of the wine, and to recognise a range of previously unauthorised winemaking techniques.

The Agreement will see the Australian fortified wine industry phase out terms such as 'Sherry' (which will become 'Apera') and 'Tokay' (which will become 'Topaque'). Under the Agreement the European Community will be required to permit the import and marketing of Australian wines produced using 16 winemaking techniques which previously lacked authorisation.

"Accession to the Agreement would strengthen trade between Australia and the European Community and will provide Australian winemakers with greater, and more secure, access to European wine markets," Mr Thomson said.

The Committee also supported Australia's accession to the *Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions*. The Convention identifies the expression of culture by an individual or group as a tangible entity and requires nations to undertake to assist the creation of these cultural expressions, both domestically and abroad.

"The Convention will help to develop and maintain Australian cultural industries and protect valuable cultural expressions," Mr Thomson said. "Accession to the Convention will demonstrate to the international community Australia's commitment to cultural diversity and will expand Australia's active engagement with UNESCO."

Report 101 is available on the Committee's website: [www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm](http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm) or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4002.

### MEDIA CONTACTS

**Media contact:** Kelvin Thomson MP (Mr Anthony Cianflone) (03) 9350 5777

**Background:** Mr Jerome Brown, Committee Secretary (02) 6277 4642