



Senate Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee
Budget Estimates 2018-19
Thursday, 31 May 2018
Daily summary

Here is the summary of today's proceedings in the Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Legislation Committee estimates hearing.

The committee met from 9.00am until 11.00pm.

The committee called the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

Topics discussed by the committee included:

- Australia's relationship with China, including current challenges and future directions;
- United Nations resolution on an independent investigation into recent events in Gaza;
- Myanmar, including United Nations fact finding mission;
- Cambodia, including update on the case of Mr James Ricketson;
- government response to the Joint Investigation Team findings into the downing of MH17;
- decision not to proceed with Australia Week in China;
- Budget measure – Undersea Cables for PNG and Solomon Islands;
- Official Development Assistance funding;
- support provided to PNG for hosting APEC 2018;
- aid funding to the Palestinian Territories, including funding to the United Nations Refugee and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees;
- US withdrawal from the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action agreement in relation to Iran's nuclear program;
- progress on the negotiations for a Code of Conduct for the South China Sea;
- India, including quadrilateral dialogue, representations for Australia to join the Malabar Exercise, and the India Economic Strategy;
- departmental travel costs, disparity of usage of Qantas over Virgin;
- former Australian High Commissioner to the UK using official account to retweet tweets from Ms Georgina Downer;
- consideration of an Australian version of the 'Magnitsky Act';
- update on the forthcoming election in Afghanistan and recent election in Iraq;
- Australia's participation in Expo 2020 Dubai; and
- Foreign Minister's partner's travel.

The committee will continue examination of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade tomorrow at 9.00am.