



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA

MEDIA RELEASE

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Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade *Chair: Senator Michael Forshaw*

Australia's aid delivery to Africa

Australia's aid to African countries will be a major focus when Parliament's Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade Committee resumes its inquiry into Australia's relationship with the countries of Africa with two days of public hearings on Tuesday 27 April in Canberra, and Wednesday 28 April in Sydney.

Committee Chairman Senator Michael Forshaw said: "Australia will be increasing its official development assistance to Africa from \$101 million in 2007–08 to \$263.9 million in 2009–10. As well, this aid will focus on assisting African countries to achieve their Millennium Development Goals."

Evidence before the Committee is that most African countries are unlikely to meet their MDG targets by 2015. Australia's aid effort will be directed towards four of the seven MDG targets—agriculture and food security (MDG 1); maternal and child health (MDG 4, 5); and water and sanitation (MDG 7).

"The Committee will receive evidence from the Australian Council for International Development, and CARE Australia. At issue is whether the amount and delivery emphasis of Australia's aid effort is appropriate."

Also appearing are representatives of Universities Australia, and academics with research interests in African issues.

"Several witnesses have called for the refocusing of Australia's research on Africa with the creation of a Centre of Excellence for African Studies or an Australia-Africa Research Institute. The Committee will explore the details of these suggestions and how they may benefit Australia's relationship with Africa."

The Committee will also receive evidence from the Australia-Africa Business Council ACT Chapter; and Coffey International, Responsible Investment Consulting, and Worley Parsons, companies with interests in Africa.

"The Government is encouraging mining and mining services companies operating in Africa to adopt a corporate social responsibility approach. The Committee is interested to know how Australian companies in Africa are performing and how the fulfilment of their corporate social responsibility commitments can be enhanced," Senator Forshaw said.

There will be a further two days of public hearings in Melbourne on Wednesday 5 May and Thursday 6 May. Witnesses will include Monash University which has a campus in South Africa, Oxfam Australia, the Australia Conservation Foundation and mining companies: BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto, Paladin Energy, and Uranex.

The public hearing in **Committee Room 2R1** Parliament House in Canberra will be webcast live on: <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

The public hearing in Sydney will be in **Room 814/815**, Parliament House, Macquarie Street

Program

Canberra—Tuesday, 27 April 2010

10.00 am	Universities Australia
10.40 am	Dr David Lucas
11.35 am	Australian Council for International Development
1.35 pm	CARE Australia
2.15 pm	Australian-Africa Business Council ACT Chapter

Sydney—Wednesday, 28 April 2010

9.00 am	Hon. Kerry Sibraa AO
9.40 am	Professor Helen Ware
10.35 am	Coffey International
11.15 am	Australian Leadership Program for Africa
11.55 am	Dr Tanya Lyons
1.30 pm	Qantas
2.10 pm	Responsible Investment Consulting
3.05 pm	Associate Professor Geoffrey Hawker
3.45 pm	Worley Parsons
4.25 pm	Mr Joel Negin

The program will continue with public hearings in Melbourne on Wednesday 5 May and Thursday 6 May. Submissions to the inquiry and transcripts of the public hearings are available on the Committee's website.

For media inquiries, contact the Committee Chairman, Senator Forshaw on (02) 9545 3112 or 0418 119 526.

For all other inquiries contact the Inquiry Secretary, John Carter, on 02 6277 4306 or visit the committee website at <http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jfact/africa%2009/index.htm>