



Premier and Treasurer of New South Wales
Australia

AA05/22668 - JB

15/12/2005

Dr U Ne Oo
18 Shannon Place
ADELAIDE SA 5000

Dear Dr Ne Oo

Thank you for your recent letter regarding counter-terrorism laws.

The special meeting of the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) on 27 September 2005 unanimously agreed to a range of proposals aimed at strengthening Australia's security and counter-terrorism arrangements.

The Prime Minister, Premiers, and Chief Ministers all agreed that the evolving nature of the terrorist threat, as demonstrated in the London attacks, presented a clear case for Australia's counter-terrorism laws to be strengthened. COAG also agreed that any new laws must be effective against terrorism and contain appropriate safeguards such as parliamentary and judicial review.

The *Anti-Terrorism Bill (No.2) 2005 (Cth)* gives effect to the agreement reached at COAG, in particular through new laws regarding control orders and preventative detention. It also implements other changes to federal laws (such as those regarding sedition) for which the Commonwealth Government is solely responsible.

In accordance with COAG's agreement, my Government has recently passed the *Terrorism (Police Powers) Amendment (Preventative Detention) Bill 2005* to complement the Commonwealth laws regarding preventative detention.

In some respects these new laws are unusual. They are not the kinds of laws that democratic governments like to introduce. However the nature of the terrorist threat we now face makes them necessary. My government has sought to strike the right balance, doing all we can to prevent terrorism while at the same time safeguarding individual rights.

Yours sincerely

Morris Iemma MP
Premier and Treasurer