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THE HON KEVIN RUDD MP

MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
CANBERRA

20 JUL 2011

Mr John Murphy MP
Member for Lowe
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Murphy

I refer to your letter of 4 July 2011 in regard to the petition submitted for the consideration of the Standing Committee on Petitions that the House urge the United Nations (UN) to take action in protecting Syrian civilians from atrocities.

Australia condemns the campaign of violence and intimidation taking place against the Syrian people. The Australian Government continues to urge the Syrian authorities to bring the violence against peaceful protesters to an immediate end and to implement genuine political reform that responds to the legitimate demands of the Syrian people. We have raised these concerns directly with Syria.

The Australian Government has urged the United Nations Security Council to adopt a resolution condemning the violence in Syria and to consider referring the situation in Syria to the International Criminal Court. In addition, we have imposed autonomous financial sanctions and travel bans against 26 individuals, including President Assad and seven Syrian entities.

Australia is also deeply concerned about the humanitarian consequences of the political unrest in Syria. On 20 June, I announced that the Australian Government would contribute \$3 million to the International Committee of the Red Cross' emergency appeal for Syria.

We will continue to work with the international community in response to the situation in Syria.

Thank you once again for bringing this matter to my attention. I trust that this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Kevin Rudd