

2 September 2014

Tony Abbott MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600



Dear Prime Minister

Australian Quakers urge you and the Government to resist any request for military involvement in the tragic events in Iraq and Syria. The humanitarian impact of the crisis there needs to be a priority, and we applaud action taken by Australia to contribute in that way. At the same time we regard it as essential that the international community, particularly through the United Nations, support moves for a lasting political settlement of the conflicts in both Iraq and Syria, in consultation with all the neighbouring countries.

We believe that the past experience of Australia in the war in Iraq has not helped resolve the underlying tensions and divisions of the region, and that further military engagement will add fuel to the overheated atmosphere. We also consider that Australia should focus on using its diplomatic, trade and aid policies in building peace and good relationships within the Asia-Pacific area.

We would also encourage Australia to use its seat on the UN Security Council to take a leadership role in supporting the participation of women in all such diplomatic moves or peace negotiations in accord with its Women, Peace and Security Agenda.

Finally, we ask that the Parliament be given the opportunity to discuss the implications of the crises in Iraq and Syria, so that there is a greater public awareness of the role that Australia can play. Parliamentary support should also be a pre-requisite for any military action by the Government.

In peace

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Julian Robertson".

Julian Robertson
Presiding Clerk
Australia Yearly Meeting
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