

War, Peace and Terrorism

No War, No More

In the wake of terrorist attacks on the United States on 11 September 2001, many people in Australia have joined those in the United States calling for an immediate and devastating attack on ... somebody. Others are urging a more measured response that strikes at the root causes of terrorism and will have lasting benefits for peace and security. In an impassioned plea against the so-called “war” on terrorism, Eric Sidoti in “No War, No More”, written ten days after the terrorist attacks, articulates the concerns shared by many that impulsive action will only perpetuate hate, insecurity and terror in the world. View [No War, No More](#).

Tortured Reasoning

In March 2003 Chris Sidoti, national spokesperson for the Human Rights Council of Australia, argued in a paper entitled “Tortured Reasoning” that the United States and its allies need to ensure they do not descend to illicit means such as torture in the so-called War on Terror. View [Tortured Reasoning](#).

Anti-Terrorism Legislation

On 9 April 2002 the HRCA made a submission to the Senate Legal and Constitutional Committee expressing its concerns with aspects of the Federal Government’s proposed legislation designed to strengthen Australia’s defences against terrorism. In its submission the HRCA concluded:

The Council recognises and supports the need for suitable measures to help prevent the occurrence of events such as those which occurred in the United States on 11 September, 2001. Such measures, however, must not denigrate the foundations upon which our democracy is built. These foundations include the concepts of civil society and the rule of law. The measures contemplated by the Bill would appear to represent significant incursions into the rule of law. ... More fundamentally, the measures if enacted would infringe Australia’s human rights obligations at international law.

The Council submitted that the Bill be re-considered in the light of the submissions and recommendations set out in the document. View the [submission](#).

The Australian Parliament subsequently passed anti-terrorism legislation. In a briefing paper prepared in March 2003 for the Human Rights Council of Australia, solicitor Jessica Wyndham gives a detailed analysis of the legislation in its national and international context. View the [Briefing paper on anti-terrorism legislation](#).

International Law and the War on Iraq

On 26 February 2003 the *Sydney Morning Herald* published a letter by 43 international law experts expressing concern as to the legality of a war on Iraq. Two of the signatories were members of the Human Rights Council of Australia, Chris Sidoti and David Kinley. View the [letter](#).

Media Release on the War on Iraq

On 9 March 2003 the Human Rights Council of Australia accused the Australian Prime Minister John Howard of hypocrisy for answering hypothetical questions to advocate executing Osama bin Laden while refusing to answer real questions about Australia's participation in any war against Iraq. View the [media release](#).

Human Rights and the War On Terrorism

Chris Sidoti addressed the Multicultural Council of the Northern Territory at Darwin on 25 March 2003 on "Human Rights and the War on Terrorism". In the address he said, "Ensuring security for every human being around the world is one of the major challenges facing us. In addressing these concerns we need to enhance the search for common ground. Human rights provides that common ground. We need to build commitment to observing human rights law, not to violating it. We need to build commitment to addressing causes, not only symptoms and consequences." View the [address](#).

America's Win in Iraq: A Pyrrhic Victory?

Jim Dunn gives context and perspective to the apparent chaos of the fervid events of the last couple of weeks in this insightful analysis of the defeat of Iraq. View the [article](#).