

DEPARTMENT OF THE PRIME MINISTER AND CABINET

PM&C
Secretary
Dr deBrouwer
Mr McKinnon
Mr Sadleir
Mr Hazlehurst
Dr Johnson
Ms Tsirbas
Mr Russo

To: Prime Minister (for phone call)

TELEPHONE CALL WITH PRIME MINISTER MONTI OF ITALY TO DISCUSS MELINDA TAYLOR

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Purpose: To thank PM Monti for Italy's assistance with the Melinda Taylor case

Timing and Venue: TBC

Our Proposed Objectives:

(Talking points are at Attachment A)

1. Thank Prime Minister Monti for Italy's assistance with the Melinda Taylor case.

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Key Points:

3. Appreciate your government's assistance with securing the release of Melinda Taylor and with her extraction from Libya.

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Sensitivities:

5. Nil.

Background:

(Background is at Attachment A)

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Kathy Klugman
First Assistant Secretary
International Division
4 July 2012

Contact Officer: s 22
s 22
Consultation: DFAT

NOTED:

Date:

ATTACHMENT A

TALKING POINTS

- I wanted to call to thank you personally for your help in securing the release from detention in Libya of Melinda Taylor and her ICC colleagues [*released 2 July*].
- I raised this with you in Los Cabos and you took immediate action which helped immeasurably to bring about this happy result [*Italy's ambassador in Tripoli was instructed to make representations to Libya regarding the case; s 33(a)(iii) and s 33(b) s 33(a)(iii) and s 33(b) Italian aircraft assisted with Ms Taylor's extraction from Libya*]
- I certainly wouldn't wish similar circumstances on any Italian citizens, but I hope Australia can return the favour as some point in the future.

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BACKGROUND

1. You met Italy's Prime Minister, Mario Monti, at the G20 Summit in Los Cabos on 18-19 June and raised with him the case of Melinda Taylor, an Australian citizen working for the International Criminal Court (ICC), s 33(a)(iii) Monti hadn't been aware of the case but agreed to assist, given the close relationship Italy shares with Libya.
2. Following that conversation, Italy provided a significant degree of assistance with the release of Ms Taylor:
 - a) Italy's Ambassador in Tripoli coordinated closely with Australia's Ambassador in Rome (David Ritchie) in making representations to the Libyan government on the need for a prompt resolution to the situation and provision of full consular access to Ms Taylor and her ICC colleagues;

s 33(a)(iii) and s 33(b)

- c) the Italian government provided a military aircraft to transport Ms Taylor and her ICC colleagues (as well as Ambassador Ritchie and the ICC President) from Tripoli to Rome on 2 July.

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Background to consular case – Melinda Taylor

5. Australian citizen and ICC-appointed defence council for Saif Al-Islam Gaddafi, Melinda Taylor, was detained in Libya on 7 June 2012 for alleged "breaches of Libyan national security." Other members of the ICC who were detained are Helene Assaf (ICC interpreter and Lebanese national), Spaniard Esteban Peralta Losilla and Russian Alexander Khodakov.
6. Melinda Taylor was released from Zintan on 2 July. Ambassador Ritchie and an Australian contracted medic, s 47F accompanied Ms Taylor on the flight but did not accompany her to The Hague. Ms Taylor and other ICC staff members arrived in Rotterdam (20 kilometres from The Hague) by ICC charter plane on 3 July. Senator Carr issued a media release.
7. Libya's Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammed Abdel Aziz, the Military Commander of the Zintan Brigade and ICC President Song held a press conference on 2 July in Zintan. Deputy Foreign Minister Aziz noted that the public prosecutor will be continuing the investigation and will put the case before the Libyan judiciary at a hearing on 23 July 2012.