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Mr Chris Crewther MP
Chair
Foreign Affairs and Aid Sub-Committee
PO Box 6021
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Dear Mr Crewther

I refer to your letter of 17 February 2017, seeking a submission to the Commonwealth Government's Inquiry into establishing a Modern Slavery Act in Australia.

The Northern Territory supports the Inquiry to strengthen Australia's efforts to combat modern slavery in all its forms.

The Northern Territory Criminal Code includes provisions that prohibit slavery. If required, the Northern Territory would work collaboratively with the Commonwealth Government and other jurisdictions to consider adopting national legislation to combat modern slavery.

The Inquiry should consider both licit and illicit forms of trade and other relations based on slavery, to work to remove loopholes and tighten definitions that might enable jurisdictional gaming or technical compliance. Any legislation should ensure that offences are robust enough to cover situations where Australians travel to other countries for the purposes of accessing services based on slavery.

Australia has ratified a number of International Labour Organisation conventions that set standards on forced labour. All states and territories are required to meet Australia's international obligations. Periodically, the Northern Territory provides input into Commonwealth reporting obligations on the application of these conventions in its jurisdictional law and practice.

I look forward to the outcomes from the Inquiry and working with the Commonwealth to progress this important issue.

Yours sincerely

MICHAEL GUNNER

7/4/17

