



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA · THE SENATE

SENATOR LYN ALLISON

Leader, Australian Democrats
Senator for Victoria

15 June 2007

The Hon Alexander Downer MP
Minister for Foreign Affairs
PO Box 6022
House of Representatives
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Minister Downer

URGENT - Malalai Joya

I write to bring your urgent attention to the matter of Afghan Parliamentarian Malalai Joya. Last month Malalai Joya returned from a successful international tour and was interviewed by a local TV station in Kabul. She has since been suspended from parliament for derogatory comments regarding the integrity of the Afghan Parliament.

Ms Joya asserts that there is a political conspiracy against her but has affirmed that she will fight against the warlords and enemies of the Afghan people who are responsible for her suspension.

I met Ms Joya when she visited Australia earlier this year and can vouch for her courage and her commitment to the people of Afghanistan. It is imperative that Malalai Joya receive international support and I call on the Australian Government, both as a country with forces in Afghanistan, and as a beacon of democracy to do all within it's power to obtain assurances from the Afghan government regarding Ms Joya's personal safety, and her prompt return to the parliament.

Yours sincerely

Senator Lyn Allison
Leader, Australian Democrats

cc Ms Onnie Wilson, Co-ordinator RAWA Supporters Melbourne