



media release

Australian Council for International Development

01/12/2010

18/2010

High Court Decision Shows Modern Understanding of Charitable Work

A decision of the High Court of Australia today reflects a contemporary understanding of charitable work, says the Australian Council for International Development (ACFID), the peak body for Australian aid and development NGOs.

The High Court found in favour of Aid/Watch in the case of *Aid/Watch v the Commissioner of Taxation*, confirming the charitable status of this organisation for taxation purposes and its right to freely comment on Government aid policy.

"This decision confirms what is already known and reflected in some areas of government policy," said Marc Purcell, Executive Director of ACFID.

"Advocacy on behalf of the poor and disenfranchised is charitable work. It is part of the normal work plan and operations of almost all charitable and aid delivery organisations in contemporary Australia."

"Such advocacy is a public good," he said, "which raises awareness of inequality and sheds light on the actions which can be taken to overcome it."

ACFID believes there is a need for law reform in this area.

"The reality of operations by modern charitable organisations needs to be reflected in taxation law, as it is in government policy," said Marc Purcell.

"The Federal Government's 2009 *Compact with the Third Sector* recognises the right of non-government organisations to conduct advocacy activities. This should also be reflected in taxation law."

Media Contact: Joy Kyriacou 0412 084 782

The Australian Council for International Development is an independent national association of Australian non-government organisations (NGOs) working in the field of international aid and development.

ph: 02 6285 1816
fax: 02 6285 1720
email: main@acfid.asn.au
website: www.acfid.asn.au

Mail: Private Bag 3
DEAKIN ACT 2600
Address: 14 Napier Close
DEAKIN ACT 2600