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LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION IN THE SENATE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
SENATOR FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

**SENATOR CLAIRE MOORE  
SHADOW MINISTER FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE PACIFIC  
SENATOR FOR QUEENSLAND**

**BISHOP MUST REJECT FURTHER AID CUTS**

Labor is deeply concerned at [reports of further cuts to international development assistance](#) in this year's Budget.

Australia has a deep interest in contributing to global poverty alleviation, and our international development program supports security and stability in our region.

The Foreign Minister's own [DFAT White Paper](#), released just four months ago declares "Australia's overseas aid program aims to help developing countries reduce poverty and achieve sustainable development **in line with Australia's national interest.**"

At the same time as it committed to a \$65 billion tax cut to big business, the 2016-17 Budget delivered the weakest levels of Australian development assistance in history, spending just 22 cents in every \$100 of our national income on foreign aid.

Over the next decade this will get even worse, with the Turnbull Government's budget figures forecasting our international development program will fall to just 0.17 per cent of GNI.

Alarming, the Minister for International Development and the Pacific, Concetta Fierravanti-Wells, yesterday appeared to confirm aid cuts were being considered.

Asked in Senate Question Time to rule out further cuts in this year's Budget, Senator Fierravanti-Wells replied "I'm sure you'll stay tuned on Budget night that will be in May".

Just this week, in an unusually blunt assessment, the [OECD Development Assistance Committee](#) urged the Turnbull Government to lift aid spending and warned cuts to international development assistance were undermining Australia's influence in the region.

The Turnbull Government's cuts to development assistance are already a source of international embarrassment for Australia, and are at odds with the generous spirit of the Australian people.

In February, [I committed a Shorten Labor Government to rebuilding Australia's international development assistance program](#) and increasing aid investment beyond current levels.

A Shorten Labor Government will contribute more to international development assistance than the current Government. And we will ensure more of it gets to the people who it is meant to be assisting.

Labor has repeatedly urged the Turnbull Government to return to a properly bipartisan approach to international development assistance.

Instead of continuing to prioritise massive tax cuts for big business, Julie Bishop must rule out further cuts to Australia's already embarrassingly low level of international development assistance in this year's Budget.

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*Authorised by Noah Carroll ALP Canberra*