

**THE HON RICHARD MARLES MP
ACTING LEADER OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY
SHADOW MINISTER FOR DEFENCE
MEMBER FOR CORIO**

**SENATOR THE HON PENNY WONG
LEADER OF THE AUSTRALIAN LABOR PARTY IN THE SENATE
SHADOW MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
LABOR SENATOR FOR SOUTH AUSTRALIA**

STATEMENT ON AUSTRALIA'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE GULF

Today the Australian Government announced that it would support an international maritime security mission in the Gulf.

As part of this, the Australian Defence Force will work with international partners to support and secure freedom of navigation in the Strait of Hormuz.

Labor believes it is critical to protect the long-standing principle of freedom of navigation.

The law of the sea is fundamental to our national interest, particularly as an island trading nation.

Labor notes the focus of this operation will be supporting freedom of navigation and safe passage for vessels in the Strait of Hormuz.

Labor has received preliminary briefings from the Office of the Prime Minister and Defence Minister and will also be receiving a comprehensive briefing from the Chief of the Defence Force.

It is critical this mission also works constructively with efforts to de-escalate tensions in the region.

Labor believes it is important that the focus of our contribution remain limited in scope and timeframe as the Government has announced.

Labor, along with the Government and much of the international community, continues to believe that the interests of global security are best achieved by keeping the Iran nuclear agreement (JCPOA) in place.

WEDNESDAY, 21 AUGUST 2019

Authorised by Paul Erickson, ALP, Canberra