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URANIUM SALES TO INDIA

Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty at Risk Key Points

Recommendations:

1. That the ALP continues to support uranium exports only to signatories of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and therefore does not allow uranium exports to India.
2. Australia continues to provide leadership on nuclear weapons non-proliferation and disarmament.

Background

- India is not a signatory to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)
- Signatories to the NPT are given access to uranium for energy generation. This is in exchange for undertakings not to develop nuclear weapons, or if they are a nuclear power, to work towards reduction of stockpiles and eventual disarmament.
- India violated its pledge to use Canadian nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, and has a history of illicit nuclear procurement and inadequate export controls.
- India is currently involved in a nuclear arms race with Pakistan.

Issues

- India does not have enough domestic uranium for both its weapons and energy programs. Australian uranium used in power generation frees up Indian uranium to make weapons. As a result any “safeguards” ensuring civilian use have little meaning.
- Provision of uranium by the “Uranium suppliers group” has weakened the NPT, and increased the ability of India to accumulate weapons and fissile material.
- By supplying uranium, Australia not only endorses and entrenches India’s weapons proliferation, but also significantly undermines the NPT.
- Export revenue would be negligible, as India would almost certainly just diversify its sources to improve reliability of supply.
- Claims around India’s strategic importance ignore the strategic importance of Pakistan (which resents preferential treatment for India), and the strategic importance of regional stability.
- We have treaties banning chemical weapons, biological weapons and landmines. The NPT global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime is essential to enable future development of a nuclear weapons convention.



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