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MEDIA RELEASE

India uranium sales would increase nuclear war risk

The Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW) today called on the Government and the ALP to lead the world towards the abolition of nuclear weapons, rather than risking nuclear weapons proliferation by selling Australian uranium to nuclear-armed India.

MAPW Vice-President Dr Margaret Beavis said:

"We cannot guarantee the "peaceful use" of uranium sold to India. Let's remember that India made its nuclear weapons in the first place, by violating its pledge to use Canadian nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. India is currently involved in a nuclear arms race with Pakistan. A nuclear war between these countries would be a human and environmental disaster."

"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 senior Indian officials have publicly stated. Any "safeguards" aiming to ensure civilian use, even if they could be enforced, therefore have little meaning.

"We have treaties banning chemical weapons, biological weapons and landmines. The nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, a global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime must be supported and strengthened, rather than undermined".

The Medical Association for Prevention of War opposes the export of uranium on a number of grounds, including the risk of nuclear weapons proliferation; health and environmental risks of nuclear power production as illustrated recently in the Fukushima disaster; and the serious and growing unsolved problem of safe nuclear waste disposal.

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FOR COMMENT PLEASE CALL

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