

MAPW & ICAN joint media release: 4 December 2011

Labor sells out on nuclear non-proliferation

The International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN) and Medical Association for Prevention of War (MAPW) have condemned the Australian Labor Party's decision today to lift Australia's ban on uranium sales to India. "This decision is a major blow to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. The Labor Party has put profits ahead of peace and security," said Tim Wright, Australian director of ICAN.

"It is absurd that Labor would want to export nuclear bomb fuel to one of the most volatile nuclear-armed regions in the world. India and Pakistan are both engaged in a major nuclear weapons build-up. Today's debate should have been about winding back uranium trade to nuclear-armed nations, not opening it up to new markets."

Dr Margaret Beavis, vice-president of MAPW, said: "Nuclear weapons are the single greatest preventable health catastrophe. Fuelling nuclear arms production through uranium exports to India will set back global efforts to rid the world of nuclear arms."

ICAN and MAPW will explore legal avenues to prevent the sale of uranium to India. "Under Australia's treaty obligations, India would be required to open up all of its nuclear facilities to international inspectors if it received Australian uranium," said Mr Wright. "The Labor Party has endorsed the sale of uranium to India, but there are still major legal obstacles in the way."