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5 February 2015

Committee Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Treaties
PO Box 6021
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
By email: jsct@aph.gov.au

Dear Sir/Madam,

**SUBMISSION TO THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES –
AUSTRALIA-INDIA NUCLEAR COOPERATION AGREEMENT**

BHP Billiton welcomes the opportunity to make a submission to the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties on the Australia-India Nuclear Cooperation Agreement.

We note the submission on this issue made by the Minerals Council of Australia to the Joint Standing Committee and support the points that it makes.

As the world's economies continue to grow, more people will gain access to electricity and living standards will rise. Significant increases in demand mean that a range of fuel sources will be needed, each with different costs and environmental impacts. The International Energy Agency's (IEA) World Energy Outlook highlights nuclear power as a key option available at scale to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from power generation.

It is the role of governments to regulate the sale of uranium. Australia's uranium is sold exclusively for use in the civilian power industry and there is a system of safeguards in place (including external monitoring), to ensure this.

Australia's safeguards are based on the system overseen by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Under these arrangements, BHP Billiton can only sell its uranium to countries with which Australia has a bilateral safeguard agreement.

We welcome the recent signing of the bilateral civil nuclear cooperation agreement between India and Australia. The agreement includes safeguards mechanisms as well as assurances that exported uranium cannot be used for the development of nuclear weapons or other military purposes. This agreement and associated administrative arrangements once settled should represent an important step towards energy security for around 400 million people in India who currently live without electricity.

Should you wish to discuss these comments further please contact Rebecca Irwin, Senior Manager, Government Relations on 03 9609 3682.

Yours sincerely

Jarrod Ball
Acting Vice President, Government Relations and Public Policy.