



Chair of US Commission on the Prevention of WMD Proliferation and Terrorism to brief Treaties Committee

The Chair of the United States Congressional Commission on the Prevention of Weapons of Mass Destruction, Proliferation and Terrorism (WMDC), former Senator Bob Graham, will appear before Federal Parliament's Treaties Committee at a public hearing for its inquiry into nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament on Thursday 26 March in Sydney.

The WMDC was formed to build on the work of the 9/11 Commission by assessing the United States' progress in preventing the proliferation of WMDs and terrorism, and to provide a roadmap to greater security with concrete recommendations for the new President and Congress. The WMDC presented its report, *World at Risk*, in December 2008 and is available online at: <http://www.preventwmd.org/>. The WMDC found that:

The number of states that are armed with nuclear weapons or are seeking to develop them is increasing. Terrorist organizations are intent on acquiring nuclear weapons or the material and expertise needed to build them ... Yet nuclear terrorism is still a preventable catastrophe. The world must move with new urgency to halt the proliferation of nuclear weapons nations—and the United States must increase its global leadership efforts to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons and safeguard nuclear material before it falls into the hands of terrorists. The new administration must move to revitalize the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty.

The Chair of the Treaties Committee Kelvin Thomson (Member for Wills, VIC) said "the Committee is pleased to have this opportunity to discuss nuclear non-proliferation with someone of Senator Graham's stature and experience. The Congressional Commission made a number of recommendations aimed at strengthening the non-proliferation regime and the Committee will be keen to learn how these are being embraced by the new US Administration."

Senator Bob Graham is a former two-term Governor of Florida and also served for 18 years representing Florida in the US Senate until 2005. His Senate service included 10 years on the Senate Select Committee on Intelligence, including a term as Chairman in 2001–2002. He has been a senior fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Senator Graham will be one of a series of witnesses the Committee will be hearing from at its public hearings to be held in Melbourne and Sydney on 25 and 26 March. The Committee will hold roundtable hearings with policy experts, academics, non-government organisations, nuclear agencies and industry representatives. The full program for the hearings is provided below.

MEDIA CONTACTS

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Background: Committee Secretary (02) 6277 4002

Inquiry Background

On 13 October 2008 the Prime Minister Kevin Rudd asked the Treaties Committee to inquire into and report on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament. The Committee has been asked to examine:

- the international treaties involving Australia which relate to nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament;
- how these treaties advance Australia's objectives in this field;
- how the treaties might be made more comprehensive or effective;
- how inter-parliamentary action can assist in strengthening treaty-based aspects of the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime;
- how the Committee and the Parliament can contribute to the work of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament.

Further information on the inquiry is available on the Committee's website:

http://www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/nuclearnon_proliferation/index.htm

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HEARING PROGRAMS

DATE: Wednesday, 25 March 2009 – Melbourne

TIME: 12.45 pm - 5.00 pm

VENUE: Seminar Room 1
Conference Centre
State Library of Victoria
Melbourne

PROGRAM:

- 1.00pm Prof Joseph Camilleri (Director, Centre for Dialogue, La Trobe University)
- 1:45pm Assoc Prof Michael Hamel-Green (Victoria University)
Mr Nicholas Maclellan
- 3.00pm Roundtable:

International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
Australian Conservation Foundation
Friends of the Earth, Australia
UN Association of Australia
Medical Association for the Prevention of War
Uniting Church
- 5.00pm Close

DATE: Thursday, 26 March 2009 – Sydney

TIME: 9.30 am - 4.00 pm

VENUE: Elizabeth Room, Level 2
Royal Automobile Club of Australia
89 Macquarie Street
Sydney

PROGRAM:

- 9.30 am US Senator Bob Graham
- 10.45 am Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation
- 11.25 am Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency
- 12.05 am Australian Uranium Association
- 1.30 pm Roundtable:

Mr Rory Medcalf (Lowy Institute for International Policy)
Dr Carl Ungerer (Australian Strategic Policy Institute)
Mr Allan Behm
Dr Ben Saul (Director, Sydney Centre for International Law)
Dr Marianne Hanson (University of Queensland)
Adj Prof Richard Broinowski (University of Sydney)
- 4.00 pm Close