

Submission on Australia and Nuclear Weapon Treaties from the Tasmanian Quaker Peace and Social Justice Committee, Hobart, Tasmania.

There are a number of fatal flaws to the NNPT which have never been addressed and have now virtually made the treaty meaningless. Given this situation, we have grave fears for the future of the Treaty following the next review conference in 2010.

The Nuclear Weapon states have never been prepared to seriously move towards total nuclear disarmament and have now divided the world into those countries like them who are seen as fit to have Nuclear Weapons ('the good guys') and those that are not ('the bad guys'). This clearly holds no water as far as the latter are concerned, for example Iran, classified as 'a bad guy' yet surrounded by acceptable nuclear weapon states: China, Russia, Pakistan and Israel.

Given the ease with which nuclear materials can be moved around the globe, this is also meaningless, and it may now well only be matter of time before non-government players get their hands on nuclear weapons or nuclear material in some form of other.

The rule that there would be no transfer of nuclear materials to states that have not signed the NNPT was finally made meaningless with the USA making India an exception.

The idea of allowing nuclear exports to nuclear weapon states for peaceful purposes never made sense anyway as either the exports, such as uranium, were mixed in with all the other yellowcake, or if kept separate in some way, simply allowed other export material to be defrayed that did not have strict safeguards. e.g. from Niger.

Export of Australian uranium was never secure given the lack of transparency by countries like China and their past contribution to horizontal nuclear proliferation, both in terms of export of technology or nuclear materials.

The IAEA was never properly funded and inspections were meaningless when they gave prior notice.

Furthermore we believe that the Australian Safeguards and Non-proliferation Office has behaved both honestly and unprofessionally as has been already well documented by Professor Richard Broinowski.

Australia is in the unenviable position of being a military ally of the chief obstacle to all the treaties referred to (the USA), from the NNPT to the CTBT, and consequently unable to take a really independent stance.

We support the government's decision not to develop a peaceful nuclear power programme in Australia but call for an end to the mining and export of uranium and for greatly increased funding and support for renewable energy alternatives instead. We

also commend the government for refusing to export uranium to India which steadfastly refuses to sign the NNPT.

We hope the government will also make it clear that Australia will not host any nuclear waste dumps as proposed by the previous government before the 2007 election.

We commend the JSCT for its report last year on proposed uranium sales to Russia.

We also commend the government for its efforts to promote a Nuclear Weapons Convention to bring about the elimination of nuclear weapons but feel that such an effort lacks credibility while we continue to be a military ally of the United States and export uranium, especially to states where there is a weak non-proliferation regime.

Peter D. Jones  
for the Peace & Social Justice Committee,  
P.O. Box 119,  
NORTH HOBART  
TAS 7002

23 December 2008