



Review of treaties on nuclear cooperation with Russia and the rights of people with disabilities

The Federal Parliament's Treaties Committee will hear evidence on three treaties during public hearings to be held in Melbourne and Sydney on 28 and 29 July 2008. These treaties include an agreement with the Russian Federation on cooperation in the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

This agreement will allow Australian uranium to be used in approved Russian nuclear power plants, subject to strict safeguards conditions. It will also promote cooperation between the two countries for the peaceful use of nuclear technology. Australian uranium can only be exported to countries with which Australia has a nuclear safeguards agreement. Both countries will be obliged to ensure that no nuclear material transferred under the Agreement is ever used for, or diverted to, a military purpose.

The Committee will also consider the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which will promote, protect and ensure the human rights and fundamental freedoms of people with disabilities. Although Convention has already been ratified, the Committee will hear evidence from community groups on its impact and an optional protocol that has not yet been signed.

Parties to the Convention will be required to eliminate discrimination on the basis of disability and to enhance the inclusion and participation of people with a disability in society. The Convention also contains provisions specifically relating to the protection of children, ensuring individuals are recognised before law, and providing equal access to facilities and services open to the community.

One in five Australians currently lives with a disability. This Convention reflects and affirms existing protections provided to people with disability under Australia's domestic laws.

Details of the hearings, including those witnesses due to appear before the Committee are attached.

Further information is available on the Committee's website: www.aph.gov.au/jsct

MEDIA CONTACTS

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DETAILS OF HEARINGS

1.00pm – 5.00pm

Monday, 28 July 2008

Venue: 'Mantra on Russell', 22 Russell Street, Melbourne

PUBLIC HEARING PROGRAM

**1.00 pm Agreement between Australia and the Russian Federation on
Cooperation in the Use of Nuclear Energy for Peaceful Purposes**

1.00pm International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons

1.30pm Australian Conservation Foundation

2.00pm Friends of the Earth Australia

3.00pm Australian Uranium Association

**3.50 pm United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with
Disabilities**

3.50pm Human Rights Law Resource Centre

4.10pm Mr Frank Hall Bentick

4.30pm Blind Citizens Australia

10.00am – 3.30pm

Tuesday, 29 July 2008

Venue: Jubilee Room, Parliament House, Sydney

PUBLIC HEARING PROGRAM

10.00am Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

10.00am Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

10.30am National Association of Community Legal Centres and NSW
Disability Discrimination Legal Centre

11.00am UN CRPD Ratification Task Force

11.45am Positive Life NSW

12.15pm Public Interest Advocacy Centre Ltd

12.45pm National Ethnic Disability Alliance and Federation of Ethnic Communities
Councils of Australia

2.00pm Convention on Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora

2.00pm Cairns Marine

2.30pm Humane Society International