



Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament report released

The Australian Parliament's Treaties Committee has released a bipartisan report on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament that makes 22 recommendations to strengthen the non-proliferation regime and help hasten the abolition of nuclear weapons.

"The Committee has concluded that it is time for concrete, demonstrable action to break down the current international stalemate and achieve a world without nuclear weapons," Committee Chair Kelvin Thomson said.

"It is important to understand that the friction between nuclear 'haves' and nuclear 'have nots' is alive and well. Throughout the history of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) the nuclear haves have stressed non-proliferation – that is, making sure no other country gets nuclear weapons. The nuclear have nots have stressed disarmament – that is, obliging the nuclear armed countries to get rid of their bombs. The nuclear have nots are frustrated by the lack of progress on disarmament. Too often this divergence of approach has led to international stalemate. Clearly we need to have action on both fronts – disarmament and non-proliferation."

The Treaties Committee recommends the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty be brought into force and negotiations commenced on a new verifiable Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty.

"By banning nuclear explosions and the future production of fissile material for nuclear weapons, these treaties are incredibly important in halting the momentum for nuclear proliferation," Mr Thomson said.

"We want all uranium exporting countries to require that the countries to whom they export uranium have an Additional Protocol to guarantee access by the International Atomic Energy Agency's inspectors. We believe that the International Atomic Energy Agency's budget needs to be increased so it can do its work properly and thoroughly."

The Committee also examined proposals for a Nuclear Weapons Convention and fuel cycle multilateralisation, and in each case has recommended further investigation by the Government.

"The Committee has been heartened by the renewed commitment of world leaders to these issues and is pleased to offer its strong support for the work of the International Commission on Nuclear Non-proliferation and Disarmament, established by Australia and Japan to reinvigorate global efforts against the proliferation of nuclear weapons," Mr Thomson said.

The Committee also supports definitive action at the 2010 NPT Review Conference. "The 2010 NPT Review Conference is the next international milestone. After the failure of the 2005 Conference, the Committee considers that Australia should do all it can to contribute to a successful outcome at this conference," Mr Thomson said.

MEDIA CONFERENCE TODAY

A media conference will be held at 4.30pm on Thursday, 17 September 2009, in Committee Room 1R4, Parliament House, Canberra.

This media conference will be webcast at <http://webcast.aph.gov.au/livebroadcasting/>

To arrange media comment from the Chair, Mr Kelvin Thomson MP, please contact Mr Anthony Cianflone on (02) 6277 4633 (Parliament House) or 0419 386 950.

Report 106 is available on the Committee's website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/jsct/reports.htm or by contacting the Committee Secretariat on (02) 6277 4002 or via email at jsct@aph.gov.au.