

Please add the following to my submission of 27 November

How departures from Australia's traditional nuclear safeguards policies risk adverse practical consequence.

Australia nuclear export policies declared by the Fraser government in the 1970s and reaffirmed by successive governments are widely published and have been forcefully promoted for some 40 years. In that time there have been two changes:

1. Adhesion by Australia under the Howard government to the enhanced IAEA safeguards (to whose development Australia had contributed much), and
2. The decision by the Gillard government, endorsed by the current government, to make an exception for India from the stipulation that we would only export Uranium to NPT member countries.

Both amendments were the subject of high profile public announcements by the government – as was appropriate for any change of policy on matters of high importance and affecting important interests of other countries. After the conclusion of each of our 22 bilateral nuclear safeguards agreements, the government made prominent public statements that the agreements conformed to our long-established safeguards policy (i.e. that established by the Fraser government).

There has been no statement by the Australian government as to what extent the proposed agreement with India conforms to our declared policy.

For forty years Australia has held firm against all countries (including the US, China, Russia, the UK etc) that we would only allow our Uranium to be exported to them if they accepted all our demands as to safeguards. Many were reluctant on one point or another, not because they wanted to use our Uranium in nuclear weapons but because they feared that some of our demands would prove onerous or limit their freedom of action. All however finally accepted.

If the impression were created that our resolve on these matters is now weaker, among other consequences:

- Each of the 39 countries covered by our network of nuclear safeguards agreements would have grounds to resent our having demanded of them compliance with terms we do not require of India. They would be encouraged to seek exemption from any aspect of the treaties which they found onerous.
- Any country with which we might seek in future to negotiate on nuclear or other matters would have grounds for expecting us to settle for less than our declared aims.