



OFFICE OF THE
MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Sister Grace Ellul
Conference of Leaders of Religious Institutes in NSW
PO Box 259
ROSEBERY NSW 1445

23 OCT 2009

Dear Sister

I refer to your letter of 8 October 2009 to Mr Stephen Smith, Minister for Foreign Affairs, which raised concerns about Australia's export of uranium to China. The Minister has asked me to reply on his behalf.

Australia has very strict rules regulating the sale and supply of its uranium. Australia will supply uranium only to countries that are parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), have in place an Additional Protocol with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and with which Australia has bilateral nuclear safeguards agreements. China meets these conditions.

The NPT recognises China as one of the world's five nuclear weapons states and, as such, China became a party to the treaty at its inception.

China's safeguards agreement with the IAEA came into force in October 1989 and allows the IAEA to carry out inspections at designated Chinese nuclear facilities. China concluded an Additional Protocol to its safeguards agreement with the IAEA in September 1998. This came into force in 2002.

In February 2007, Australia and China concluded a bilateral Nuclear Material Transfer Agreement designed to ensure Australian uranium, nuclear technology and expertise are used solely for peaceful purposes. The agreement specifies that Australian uranium will only be used at facilities covered by China's safeguards agreement with the IAEA.

The Australian Government is confident China will honour its commitments under the bilateral Nuclear Material Transfer Agreement.

Thank you for raising your concerns with the Minister. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Frances Adamson'.

Frances Adamson
Chief of Staff