

Sino–Australian co–op on nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes: Wen

China is acting as the future world leader should, and Australia would like to sell uranium!

People's Daily (Xinhua) and Washington Post
April 3, 2006

Visiting Chinese Premier Wen Jiabao said Monday in Canberra that bilateral cooperation between China and Australia on nuclear energy is solely for peaceful purposes with safeguards provided by related agreement signed by the two sides.

"China and Australia are conducting nuclear cooperation and this is solely for the peaceful purposes," Premier Wen told reporters at a joint press conference with his Australian counterpart John Howard.

As a member of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and a signatory to the Non–Proliferation Treaty (NPT), he said, China will surely observe the provisions and regulations laid out by the IAEA and in the NPT.

"China is a responsible country in the international community," the premier said.

He said while China and Australia signed an agreement on nuclear cooperation earlier Monday, they also put in place a mechanism for safeguards.

"We believe that this safeguards mechanism will ensure that the nuclear cooperation will not be used for non–peaceful purposes," Wen said.

Howard, for his part, also expressed satisfaction that the safeguards that are there will be enforced.

He said it's on that basis that Australia and China have entered agreements on cooperation in nuclear energy.

Responding to a question about China–Australia cooperation on mineral resources, Premier Wen said the two sides must proceed with their cooperation in this field on the basis of mutual respect, mutual benefit and equality.

"The mineral trade constitutes an important part of economic and trade relations between China and Australia," he said, noting that bilateral trade in mineral resources should be conducted and approached from a long–term perspective.

Wen is here on an official visit to Australia at the invitation of Prime Minister Howard. Prior to the press conference, the two leaders held talks and witnessed the inking of a series of inter– governmental agreements and documents, including the agreement for bilateral cooperation in the peaceful use of nuclear energy.