

US-India Nuclear Energy Agreement: A Bad Deal or Global Security and for Energy Security

Thursday 23 August 2007, by [CHAWLA L. S.](#), [IME John](#), [THOMASSON Catherine](#), [WESTBERG Gunnar](#) (Date first published: 17 August 2007).

Indian Doctors for Peace and Development (IDPD) and Physicians for Social Responsibility - USA (PSR) - the Indian and US affiliates, respectively, of International Physicians for the Prevention of Nuclear War (IPPNW) - have grave concerns about the negotiated accord between US President George W. Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, which, in return for India's agreement to put its civilian reactors under international inspections, effectively removes the ban on the sale of fuel and civilian nuclear technology to India enacted by the US Nuclear Non-Proliferation Act of 1978 and erodes the bulwark against the further spread of nuclear weapons established in the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). Under the agreement, India will retain its nuclear arms program and keep a third of its reactors under military control without international inspection, including two so-called fast-breeder reactors that could produce fuel for weapons. The accord would also allow India to build future breeder reactors and keep them outside international inspections.

Whereas the use, testing, production, transportation and stockpiling of nuclear weapons constitute a grave danger to human life and health;

Whereas the proliferation of nuclear weapons is a grave danger to global security;

Whereas our groups support the prevention of nuclear war and the elimination of nuclear weapons;

Whereas the "Section 123" agreement between the United States and India would further erode the

imperfect but prevailing international legal standards for peaceful cooperation and control and security of nuclear materials and nuclear technology;

Whereas the US-Indian Nuclear Agreement would weaken the global norm against nuclear weapons proliferation. The unique exception for India, as is provided under the deal, would further aggravate the discriminatory nature of the nuclear non-proliferation regime and prevent progress toward fulfillment of US obligations to negotiate in good faith toward nuclear disarmament contained in Article VI of the NPT. By further undermining the currently unstable non-proliferation order, this Agreement would encourage additional states to acquire nuclear weapons and gravely damage the prospects of global nuclear disarmament. It would also further worsen the ongoing nuclear arms race in South Asia by significantly increasing India's capabilities for fissile material production;

Whereas the radically boosted nuclear power program in India, following as a consequence from this Agreement, would throttle investments for developing environmentally benign renewable sources of energy including wind, solar, and others, having grave impacts on the prospects of long-term energy security. As bodies of professional doctors working for peace and disarmament we feel it is our duty to warn about the use of nuclear energy for power generation.

This is neither safe nor economical and is fraught with enormous dangers to the health of people. These dangers were once again made clear several weeks ago when damage from an earthquake forced the closing of the Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Station in Japan. Furthermore, a study published in July in the European Journal of Cancer Care (2007, 16, 355-363), concluded that there is up to 24% rise in leukemia in children around nuclear facilities in Canada, France, Germany, Great Britain, Japan, Spain, and the US.

Therefore, Indian Doctors for Peace and Development (IDPD), Physicians for Social Responsibility - USA (PSR), and the entire IPPNW federation of national medical associations committed to the abolition of nuclear weapons:

- 1) Call upon the Parliament of India and the United States Congress to reject this agreement as dangerous to international peace and security;
- 2) Call upon the members of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) to reject this agreement as contrary to their objectives; and
- 3) Call upon the United Nations Security Council to undertake to support NSG guidelines and the improvement of international legal rules for the prevention of nuclear proliferation and the promotion of nuclear disarmament.

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