

# NUCLEAR *facts*



## *Does Canada contribute to nuclear weapons proliferation?*

**NO.** CANADA HAS A NUCLEAR PROGRAM DEDICATED TO PEACEFUL PURPOSES ONLY. ALTHOUGH CANADA WAS ONE OF THE FIRST COUNTRIES INVOLVED IN NUCLEAR RESEARCH DURING WORLD WAR II, IMMEDIATELY AFTER THAT WAR THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT RENOUNCED ANY INTEREST IN NUCLEAR WEAPONS.

Since then the domestic program has been focused solely on peaceful uses and strong policies have been adopted to ensure that any export of nuclear technology, equipment or materials does not contribute to nuclear weapons.

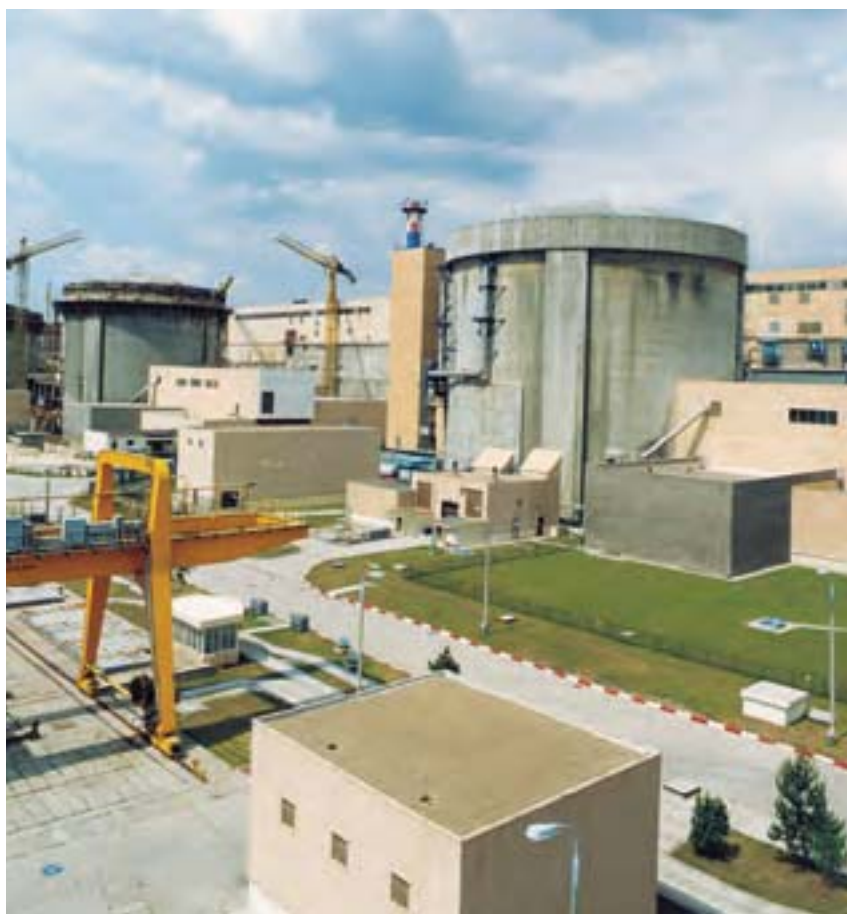
Canada is a major exporter of uranium and of radioisotopes for medical and industrial purposes. It has also built CANDU nuclear power plants in a number of countries. These exports are all subject to stringent nuclear export and nuclear non-proliferation policies. A key aspect of these policies is

the international Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, usually referred to as the Non-Proliferation Treaty or NPT.

### **Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT)**

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons came into force in 1970. It commits nuclear-weapon states (USA, Russia, United Kingdom, France and China) to nuclear disarmament and all states to the prohibition of the proliferation of nuclear weapons.

Adherence to the NPT is confirmed by the International Atomic Energy Agency through its "full scope" safeguards program that includes: on-site inspections; examination of records and reports; taking and analysis of samples; and on-site surveillance techniques such as cameras and seals. Most countries are party to the NPT.



*All nuclear power stations in Canada and around the world are comprehensively monitored to ensure that materials cannot be diverted for use in nuclear weapons.*

## Nuclear export policy

From the very beginning of international trade in nuclear products and technologies, Canada has required assurances from trading partners that Canadian-supplied items would not be used in any nuclear weapons programs.

The existing policy requires any “non-nuclear-weapon” state wishing to enter into nuclear co-operation with Canada to:

- make a legally binding commitment to nuclear non-proliferation by becoming a Party to the NPT, or an equivalent, internationally legally binding agreement; and
- accept full-scope safeguards by the International Atomic Energy Agency on all of its current and future nuclear activities.



Canada requires all countries to sign bilateral agreements and sign the Non-Proliferation Treaty before allowing trade in nuclear technology.

In addition, all countries wishing to enter into nuclear co-operation with Canada must conclude a legally binding bilateral agreement, a Nuclear Cooperation Agreement (NCA), with Canada that includes:

- assurances that Canadian nuclear exports will be used only for peaceful, non-explosive end uses;
- Canadian control over the retransfer to a third party of any Canadian items subject to the Nuclear Cooperation Agreement;
- Canadian control over the reprocessing of any Canadian spent nuclear fuel and over the storage and subsequent use of any separated plutonium;
- Canadian control over the high enrichment of Canadian uranium and the subsequent storage and use of the highly enriched uranium;
- agreement that, in the event the International Atomic Energy Agency is unable to apply safeguards in the partner country, that Canada will be permitted to carry out bilateral safeguards;
- assurances that adequate physical protection measures will be taken with respect to Canadian nuclear items so as to ensure that they will not be stolen or otherwise misused.

These policies are administered by the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade.

## International Atomic Energy Agency

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is an independent inter-governmental, science and technology-based organization, part of the United Nations family, with 130 members. It is based in Vienna, Austria. Among its objectives are:

- to assist its Member States in planning for and using nuclear science and technology for various

peaceful purposes;

- to develop nuclear safety standards and promote the achievement and maintenance of high levels of safety in applications of nuclear energy, as well as the protection of human health and the environment against ionizing radiation;
- to verify, through its inspection system, that States comply with their commitments, under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and other non-proliferation agreements, to use nuclear materials and facilities only for peaceful purposes.

Following the entry into force of the NPT in 1970, the IAEA developed the system of full-scope safeguards that is designed to cover all current and future nuclear activities of a non-nuclear weapons state.

The application of safeguards under the NPT is a three-step process involving submission of information by each Treaty country, inspection by IAEA personnel and open reporting.

## Canada as a world leader

Canada’s non-proliferation policy has not been without a price. A number of commercially attractive business opportunities with other countries have been refused because they did not conform to the requirements of our policy. Canada is recognized as a world leader in nuclear non-proliferation.

*See also the Web sites of the International Atomic Energy Agency [www.iaea.org](http://www.iaea.org) the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission [www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca](http://www.nuclearsafety.gc.ca) the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade [www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca](http://www.dfait-maeci.gc.ca)*

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