

China harps on consensus for India NSG bid despite US backing

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Beijing: Notwithstanding the US' strong backing for India to join the Nuclear Suppliers Group, China today harped on the need for consensus in the elite body where it is reportedly pushing for Pakistan's entry.

“**The NSG has made serious political and technical standards with regard to accepting members. One compulsory standard is that the NSG members must be signatory states to the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT),” Chinese Foreign Ministry spokesman Hong Lei said here.**

Asked what is the criteria that China wants non-NPT members to follow to get admitted to the 48-member NSG and on what basis it carried on with civil nuclear cooperation with Pakistan, Hong said like other non-proliferation regimes NSG is also based on the NPT.

"This year's consensus which has long upheld by the international community and was also reaffirmed in last year's NPT review session," he said skirting any references to Pakistan which has received a number of China-made nuclear reactors including the two of 1,100 MW being installed in Karachi plant.

India, Pakistan, Israel and South Sudan are among four UN member states which have not signed the NPT, the international pact aimed at preventing the spread of nuclear weapons. The NSG has already granted an exclusive waiver for India in 2008 to access civil nuclear technology after China reluctantly backed India's case based on the Indo-US nuclear deal.

According to reports from the US, China is equating Pakistan's case with India now and also wants its close ally to be admitted into the NSG despite Islamabad's questionable record on non-proliferation.

"All multilateral non-proliferation regimes, including the NSG, take NPT membership as the requirement to accept new members. China together with the other NSG members believes that with regard to accepting the membership of non-NPT countries, the NSG members should discuss this based on the NSG rules and standards and make decisions on consensus," Hong said.

Asked about State Department spokesman John Kirby's comments that India meets missile technology control regime requirements and is ready for NSG membership, Hong said "We have noted such reports," but did not comment on India's case.

"China supports and played a constructive role in the discussion recently held in NSG. China also states that such position targets no particular country and this position applies to all non-NPT countries. China sticks to this position in order to maintain international nuclear non-proliferation regime based on the NPT," he said.

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