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A bright economic future, says Zhao

Peking, Jan 18.

The Chinese Prime Minister, Mr Zhao Ziyang, today said there was a bright future for economic and technical co-operation between Hongkong and the mainland following the removal of the political obstacle between China and Britain.

During a meeting with a visiting Hongkong delegation led by Lord Kadoorie, Mr Zhao said the Chinese Government attached great importance to the nuclear power station project in Daya Bay — the biggest joint venture undertaken by China since it opened itself to the outside world.

It is also the country's first nuclear power station with a capacity of more than a million kilowatts, he added.

"Through this project," he said, "we can gain experience in construction and management."

"This co-operative project will exert a big impact on both China's four modernisations and Hongkong's economic prosperity."

Mr Zhao pointed out that the China Light and Power Co, in undertaking this nuclear power station project,

would stimulate more Hongkong and foreign entrepreneurs to invest in China or enter into various forms of co-operation with China.

Lord Kadoorie expressed the hope that today's co-operation would lead to more and greater co-operation and that the co-operation in building the nuclear power station would herald more co-operative projects.

Lord Kadoorie said the present project was a link in a chain of co-operative projects, pledging all-out effort to make the project a success.

Before the signing ceremony, the Chinese Deputy Prime Minister, Mr Li Peng, reiterated that China had no intention, either at present or in the future, to help non-nuclear countries to develop nuclear weapons and would abide by the stipulations of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

He stressed that China's nuclear co-operation with other countries was confined to peaceful purposes alone.

Mr Li said this in an interview with the New China News Agency before the historic event.

He said the construction of the power station marked China's beginning in building large nuclear power stations.

Mr Li said China was discussing co-operation in nuclear energy with France, West Germany, the United States, Brazil, Pakistan and Japan.

On China's nuclear policy, he said Mr Zhao had declared at the second session of the sixth National People's Congress in May that China was critical of the discriminatory "treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons" and had declined to accede to it.

On the other hand, he added, China by no means favoured nuclear proliferation, nor did it engage in such proliferation by helping other countries develop nuclear weapons.

Mr Li said:

"Last year, China joined the International Atomic Energy Agency and was appointed a council member country."

"China will maintain good relations of co-operation with the agency and commit itself to its due obligations and abide by the agency's stipulations." — Albert Chan.