CHINESE MINERS LOOK TO THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

Delegates attending this week’s China Mining 2007 congress in Beijing have been told the Northern Territory is a vast land of rich minerals and future opportunities.

Minister for Mines Chris Natt, the only Australian government Minister speaking at the congress, told the opening that the relationship between Australia and China has never been stronger.

“I am heartened by the momentum of growth and the on-going atmosphere of cooperation and consultation between our two countries,” Mr Natt said.

“The Northern Territory is the only Australian jurisdiction with a dedicated China Strategy, focused on assisting Chinese companies to identify exploration opportunities and joint venture opportunities with NT business partners.

“While in Beijing this week I have met with some of China’s largest mining companies, including Sinosteel Corporation, Baosteel Group, Stone Resources Limited, Xingye Group and CITIC Group.

“The Northern Territory is one of the last great exploration frontiers, and these companies have expressed interest in applying for exploration licences for the Territory’s vast amounts of under-explored land, and entering into joint ventures with companies already on the ground.

“Amongst the areas of interest to the companies are the extensive sand plains to the west of Tennant Creek, which has potential for copper, gold and base metals, and the western desert of Central Australia which is virtually untouched by exploration companies, despite its undeniable potential for gold, base metals and petroleum.”

Mr Natt said the Government’s China Strategy was delivering results real for the Territory’s mining industry.

“A key element of our China Strategy is to assist Chinese enterprise and get them onto the ground for greenfield exploration,” he said.

“This was a successful exercise for Jianxi Bureau of Nuclear Industry Geology and Legend Investment International who have identified specific exploration opportunities and now have three of their exploration license applications in the process of being granted.”