

## China extends Rio probe by two months

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SINGAPORE, Nov 12 (Reuters) - China has extended by two months a commercial espionage investigation into **Rio Tinto** mining executive Stern Hu, Australian Foreign Minister Stephen Smith said on Thursday.

The arrest of Hu, an Australian, strained ties between Beijing and Canberra. Hu was formally arrested in August along with three Chinese executives from the global miner.

'The Chinese authorities, in accordance with Chinese law, have extended the investigation period for a further two months so that will take the investigation period, as I understand it, to mid-January,' Smith told reporters on the sidelines of an Asia-Pacific meeting in Singapore.