

Declaration

Nuclear Energy - Part of a Low-Carbon Energy Future

We, the undersigned believe that the EU needs to maintain a diversified and flexible energy mix in order to meet the combined challenges of security of energy supply, CO₂ reduction and delivery of electricity at competitive prices. We are convinced that nuclear energy can help to address all these challenges.

In this regard we recall that the European Parliament believes that EU energy needs must be produced from carbon-free sources or technologies which cut greenhouse gas emissions; recognise that nuclear energy is an important part of the energy mix in a number of Member States; and note the role that it currently plays in some Member States in maintaining security of electricity supply, as part of the energy mix, and in preventing CO₂ emissions.

At present, low-CO₂ emitting sources: nuclear and renewable energies, (including hydropower), produce 45% of the EU's electricity representing 17% of total energy consumption. Nuclear energy accounts for more than three-quarters of this low-carbon electricity, and nearly one third of total electricity generated.

Nuclear energy prevents nearly 720 million tonnes of CO₂eq emissions a year in the EU, equivalent to nearly all the CO₂eq emitted by Europe's entire car fleet. To put things in to perspective, the overall Kyoto GHG emission reduction target for the EU (-8% on 1990 levels) is approximately 446 million tonnes CO₂eq.

We therefore support the optimal use of existing nuclear capacity and the building of new nuclear power plants to help meet significant future electricity demand. However, we strongly believe that there is no single solution to this global problem. All low-carbon power generation technologies will need to contribute. No single source should be ruled out or prioritised for ideological or political reasons.

Therefore, we call upon the EU's leaders to:

- recognise that nuclear energy is an important part of the EU low-carbon energy mix and will play an increasing role in limiting CO₂ emissions;
- promote a dispassionate debate on nuclear energy and ensure that nuclear energy is placed on an equal footing with other methods of carbon abatement;
- orchestrate a transition to a low-carbon economy;
- recognise the need to move towards a low-carbon portfolio of generating technologies by the middle of the century;
- encourage more investment in low-carbon power generation technologies, including nuclear energy, renewables, carbon capture and sequestration and energy efficiency;
- recognise the potential of hydrogen produced from nuclear energy as a future transport fuel; and
- promote nuclear energy as part of the solution in the next phase of the Kyoto Protocol (post-2012).

Among the first signatories:

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The Declaration on Nuclear Energy - Part of a Low-Carbon Energy Future is the result of an initiative:

- launched by the European Atomic Forum (FORATOM), the trade association for the nuclear energy industry in Europe;
- endorsed by BUSINESSEUROPE, the Confederation of European Business, the Union of the Electricity Industry-EURELECTRIC, and the International Federation of Industrial Energy Consumers (IFIIEC Europe);

- with the full backing of 56 Members of the European Parliament from across the political spectrum; and
- timed to coincide with the upcoming United Nations Climate Change Conference COP 13 and COP/MOP 3 in Bali, Indonesia (3-14 December 2007).