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EU climate policy

Commission proposals on climate and energy would condemn future generations

On the occasion of the presentation by the European Commission of its proposal for an EU energy strategy, Finnish Green and vice-chairperson of the Environment Committee **Satu Hassi** said:

"The Commission's proposals on emissions are nothing short of climate crime, betraying the future generations of EU citizens that will be left with the real legacy of our inaction on climate change. Far from giving leadership on climate change, the Commission is proposing that Europe abdicate all ambition on reducing emissions and set a target of a paltry 20% reduction by 2020, in spite of overwhelming scientific evidence suggesting much greater global reductions are necessary (1)."

Luxembourg Green and energy spokesperson **Claude Turmes** added:

"Commission President Barroso's bluster about a 'new industrial revolution' cannot mask the holes in this energy strategy. Despite the preoccupation with security of oil supply, the strategy hardly mentions the transport sector, which accounts for the lion's share of oil use.

"There is overwhelming public support for energy efficiency and renewables to address the dual problems of climate change and security of supply, yet the Commission failed to put these domestic solutions at the centre of its strategy. The Commission has publicly expressed its commitment to renewable energy but its proposals (to end the existing directive on renewable electricity and withhold the promised directive on renewables in heating and cooling) would in reality damage the emerging renewables sector."

Rebecca Harms Green energy spokesperson commented:

"The Commission is putting its eggs in the nuclear basket, even though the latest evidence shows only 20% of EU citizens support nuclear (2). A report, commissioned by the Greens, has made clear that Europe can achieve necessary emissions reductions and, at the same time, address the issue of energy supply without recourse to the problematic and unpopular nuclear option (3).

"Today's proposal by the Commission should be seen as just that: a proposal and a bad one. Setting a target of 20% reductions by 2020 would scupper the objective of limiting temperature increases as a result of climate change to 2 degrees. Germany's Environment Minister Sigmar Gabriel has given his support to a 30% EU emissions reduction by 2020, as has the European Parliament, and the German Presidency should push for this in the run up to the Spring Summit."

Notes:

(1) Scientific evidence suggests a 30% emissions reduction (compared with 1990 levels) is necessary to limit the rise in temperatures to 2 degrees.
(2) The latest Eurobarmeter released this week indicated that only 20% of EU citizens support nuclear energy, while 80% of citizens are in favour of solar energy and 71% support wind energy.
(3) The climate and energy scenarios study is available here (pdf).

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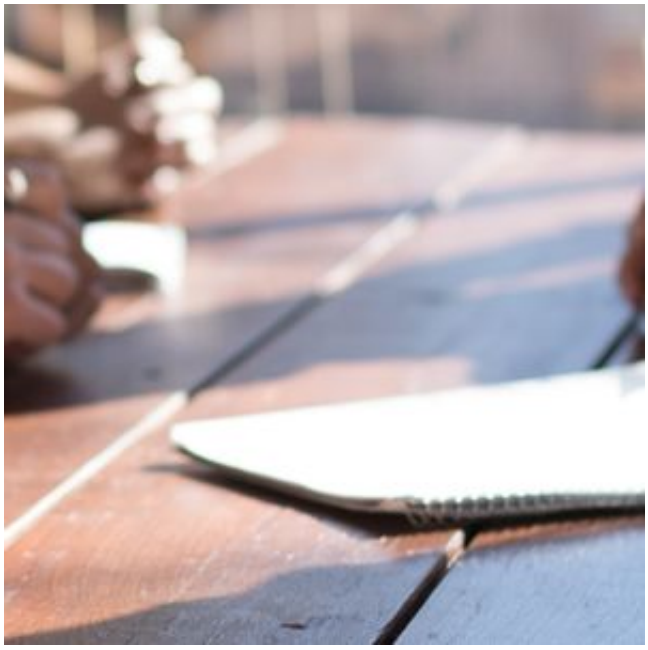
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