Press release | 25.04.2013

Chernobyl/EU nuclear funds

EU sponsorship of Soviet-era plants effectively funding elevated nuclear risk in Ukraine

In the context of this Friday's 27th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, the Greens have hit out at proposed funding from the European Commission aimed at keeping outdated nuclear reactors in Ukraine online. Commenting on the funding proposals, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** said:

"27 years on from the Chernobyl disaster, with the malignant consequences still being felt, the Commission is proposing to provide funding for the life-extension of outdated, risky nuclear reactors in the Ukraine. These Soviet-era reactors clearly pose an elevated risk, meaning the EU Commission is essentially increasing the nuclear risk in the region by sponsoring their prolonged operation.

"The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has already made €300 million in funding available for this Ukrainian nuclear project, while a decision on the Euratom component (an additional €300 million) is still pending. Officially, this money will be put into the safety of the reactors, but essentially the programme will serve to ensure the lifetime extension of old Soviet-era reactors. For this reason, we are calling on EU commissioners Günter Oettinger and Stefan Füle to halt the allocation of these funds.

"In recent years, the EU has already funded high voltage lines transporting electricity from the Ukraine to the EU. The EU is cynically benefitting from cheap nuclear electricity imports, whilst adding to the risks in the Ukraine.

"27 years on and the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster are still being felt, with the wrecked reactor still not stabilised. The exclusion zone will remain uninhabitable for a long time, with increased radiation levels far away from the site. After Chernobyl and Fukushima, it should now be clear that EU funds should be used to promote the sustainable transformation of energy systems within the EU and beyond its borders - not dangerous nuclear reactors."

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Rebecca Harms

Member

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