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Nuclear stress tests

Serious safety concerns but no stress for nuclear industry as Commission dodges tough questions

The final report of the disputed EU nuclear stress tests, proposed by the European Commission in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster, is expected to be adopted by the Commission tomorrow. Leaked drafts of the stress tests confirm that large numbers of nuclear reactors in Europe are deficient in basic security areas but the tests also fail to properly assess a host of key risks to nuclear reactors, and contain no proposals to close unsafe reactors. Commenting ahead of the Commission meeting, Greens/EFA co-president **Rebecca Harms** stated:

"The final report of the EU nuclear stress test charade looks set to dodge all the tough questions as expected. One thing seems clear: this exercise has been orchestrated to cause as little stress to the nuclear industry as possible.

"While the report found deficiencies in many of Europe's nuclear reactors, there are no real proposals for follow-up. However, the fact that the stress tests failed to address risks in crucial areas - ageing technology, terrorist attacks or human error - is a more damning indictment of the whole exercise.

"At the very least, the Commission should be pressing for the security deficiencies identified in the report to be rectified. However, given the prohibitive costs - with estimates of up to €25 billion - investors will only be willing to commit to this if the reactors stay online far longer than foreseen for safety reasons. These stress tests cannot be used as an excuse to justify lifetime extensions for decrepit nuclear reactors. If this exercise was serious, the Commission should be recommending the closure of unsafe or ageing reactors."

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Rebecca Harms

Member

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