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World nuclear industry status report

Evidence points to steady decline of nuclear power industry worldwide

The Greens/EFA group today presented the new edition of the World Nuclear Industry Status Report (1) at the European Parliament. The report shows a record drop in nuclear electricity generation in the world in 2012 as well as rapid ageing of nuclear power plants.

Commenting on the findings, **Rebecca Harms**, president of the Greens/EFA group in the European Parliament, stated:

"Once again, this report shows the glaring gap between the promises of the nuclear lobby and the reality. Nuclear power is in steady decline. The current number of 427 nuclear power plants in operation is 17 fewer than in the peak year of 2002. Annual nuclear electricity generation in 2012 dropped by 7% compared to the previous year. But this decline cannot be attributed to only the shutdown of most of the Japanese nuclear fleet after the Fukushima catastrophe. Most of the other top nuclear energy-producing countries have reduced their nuclear output as well.

The reactors in operation are getting older and older and many of the projects listed as under construction face delays and cost overruns. Cost estimates for new nuclear capacity have increased in the past decade from 1000 to 7000 US Dollars per kW installed. At the same time the costs for renewable energy installations are rapidly decreasing. This is far from a nuclear renaissance - it looks instead like a very expensive attempt to keep an ailing technology alive.

For the first time, the report also gives an update on the situation in Fukushima after the catastrophe. 150,000 people remain in forced evacuation and it is becoming painfully clear that the situation at the reactor site is far from under control. Massive amounts of water still have to be pumped into the destroyed reactors. It is estimated that by now more than 2.5 times the total amount of cesium-137 released at the Chernobyl accident is contained in almost 400,000 tons of radioactive water that has leaked into the basements of the reactor

buildings.

The verdict is clear: Nuclear is on its way out. The efforts of the nuclear enthusiasts to keep this technology in the energy mix come at a high price and still fail to stop the steady decline of nuclear around the world. It is high time to draw the political consequences and focus efforts on sustainable, clean and safe energy solutions for the future - on energy savings, energy efficiency and renewables."

Green MEP **Yannick Jadot**, member of the industry, energy and research committee, said:

"With the ongoing disaster in Fukushima, the myth of zero risk has collapsed in France. With the successive increases in electricity prices, the myth of cheap nuclear energy has also collapsed. Nuclear energy is expensive everywhere and private investors and banks are turning away from this sector. The debate on a transition to sustainable energy should lead to ambitious goals for energy savings, energy efficiency and renewables and it is time for the French government to be transparent regarding the financial crisis the nuclear industry is going through, with EDF's astronomical debt now over €40bn. Despite Mr Proglia's ambitions, EDF should prioritise investment in renewables and energy savings rather than prolonging the life of France's old nuclear plants."

(1) The World Nuclear Industry Status Report was drawn up by a team of six experts from France, Japan and the UK, under the direction of renowned nuclear expert Mycle Schneider. The Greens-EFA and the Heinrich-Böll Foundation US are co-sponsors of the project.

The full 'World Nuclear Industry Status Report 2013' is available online here:

</legacy/fileadmin/dam/Documents/Studies/20130710MSC-WorldNuclearReport2013-LR-V1.pdf>

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