

Conclusions of the 4th plenary meeting of the European Nuclear Energy Forum, Prague, 28-29 May 2009

Hosted by the Czech EU Presidency, the fourth plenary meeting of the European Nuclear Energy Forum (ENEF) took place in Prague on 28 and 29 May 2009, gathering 300 high-ranking participants from all relevant stakeholders and discussing opportunities, risks and transparency of nuclear energy.

The Forum was opened by the Prime Minister of the Czech Republic and President of the EU Council, Jan Fischer, the Prime Minister of Slovakia, Robert Fico, EU Commissioner Vladimír Špidla, and former Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolánek, in the presence of several Ministers, State Secretaries, Members of the European Parliament, industry leaders as well as representatives of national nuclear regulators and the civil society.

The debate in Prague confirmed that more European Member States are considering nuclear energy as an important contributor to the low carbon energy mix and security of supply. Strong support was expressed for developing in the EU the most advanced framework for nuclear safety, security and non proliferation. The Forum welcomed in particular the finalization of the nuclear safety directive.

Regarding the decision of three environmental non-governmental organizations to end their participation in the Forum, the European Commission confirmed that the door remains open for them and other organizations wishing to contribute, recalling also the Commission's continuous efforts to meet their specific concerns in view of ensuring a balanced and open debate amongst all key actors.

The presentations in Prague also concentrated on the ongoing work of the three working groups of the Forum, which focus on opportunities, risks and transparency of nuclear energy. With regard to the next plenary meeting in Bratislava in May 2010, the Forum working groups should focus in particular on the following issues, taking fully into account also the conclusions from the previous plenary meetings:

Opportunities

- To further examine the competitiveness of nuclear energy and proceed with the comparative analysis of the retained electricity scenarios in order to have a sound report for the next plenary meeting. Work with the other Working Groups to progress on the Opportunities and Threats analysis of the SWOT analysis. Analyse the opportunities for regional approaches for nuclear new build.
- Investigate the potential for a common approach for design license for new reactors that could be valid in all Member States and propose a way forward.
- Taking account of the impact assessment on the state of Nuclear Liability at EU level, provide an analysis of what could be done to help common approaches.
- Pursue the dialogue between the investors/industry and the financial community to help establish a better common understanding of the opportunities/risks of investing in nuclear facilities. Analyse the effect of measures to facilitate the shift to low carbon energy sources (e.g. European emission trading scheme) and the opening up of the electricity market on nuclear investments and the cost/price of nuclear produced electricity and compare the different financing models. Propose actions to improve the investment climate in close contact with the sustainable Nuclear Energy Technology Platform (SNE-TP) taking full

account of the Strategic Energy Technology Plan where long term perspectives for nuclear power are developed.

- Examine the situation relative to the supply of radioactive isotopes for medical purposes and evaluate the need for action within ENEF.
- Analyse the role nuclear energy will have to play in the smart grid concept
- Examine new applications of nuclear energy, in particular transport and desalinisation of sea water

Risks

- Continue to improve nuclear safety aspects on the basis of the Safety Directive, which provides for a high level of nuclear safety in the EU, by identifying key issues for the practical implementation of the safety principles, prominent ones being safety culture as well as human and organisational safety factors.
- European initiatives to further strengthen the international non-proliferation system by strengthening cross-institutional networks and on contributing to an integrated European approach, taking into account Council lines of actions, the new Commission Communication as well as Member State projects in the run-up to the NPT review in 2010.
- Finalise proposed actions on education and training including the European Training Academy on Nuclear Management and a Human Resource Observatory in order to attract sufficient and adequate human resources to the nuclear sector, including regulators, TSOs and industry, making use of complimentary activities under SNE-TP.
- Guidance for national roadmaps and European actions for the successful implementation of geological waste repositories concentrating on the possible drivers for advancing the issue in the EU. Establish links with the Implementing Geological Disposal Technology Platform.

Transparency

- Assemble best practices in Europe to enrich and stimulate the application of the recommendations on information, communications, participation and decision making which contribute to strengthen governance and transparency. These recommendations along with suitable best practice examples aim to make improvements in the governance framework for siting, operation and decommissioning of nuclear facilities as well as transportation, waste management and final disposal, by raising public awareness and adequate involvement.
- Stimulate Member States to initiate energy dialogues using the ENEF process as exemplary model, thereby opening up the way for a ideology-free debate involving all stakeholders at national level
- Support launch of national and local fora, by providing advice and suitable input, as well as the consultative process on the implementation of the Aarhus Convention; integrate results from such processes in the work of ENEF. Support in this context the conference co-organized by ANCLI/Eurocli and the European Commission in Luxemburg on 24 and 25 June on implementing the Aarhus convention in the nuclear sector, as well as EESC or local events organised by GMF.