

## **FORATOM welcomes announcement of new nuclear dawn in UK**

**FORATOM, the trade association representing the European nuclear industry, has welcomed the announcement made by the British Prime Minister, Tony Blair, that a new generation of power stations will be built in the UK to help address the security of energy supply and climate change problems that beset the country. Referring to the contents of a draft version of the UK government's much-anticipated energy review - the final review will be published in July - the British premier confirmed that energy policy in the UK will be based upon a three-pronged approach. This approach will combine "the replacement of nuclear power stations, a big push on renewables and a step-change on energy efficiency."**

In a wide-ranging speech to the CBI (Confederation of British Industry) that included statements on policy relating to the economy, education, science and healthcare, Tony Blair heralded the arrival of a new dawn for nuclear power in Britain based not upon an ideological viewpoint but upon the urgent need to address "...the twin pressures of climate change and energy security." Tony Blair highlighted that according to the draft of the energy review, if current policy is unchanged by 2025 the UK will become heavily dependent upon gas imports (up to 80/90% reliance), mostly from the Middle East, Russia and Africa. Furthermore, it will not be able to meet its CO<sub>2</sub> emission reduction commitments. He added that unless a longer-term energy policy based upon the combination of a nuclear new build programme, increased promotion of renewables and greater energy efficiency is driven through now, "...we will be committing a serious dereliction of duty to the future of this country."

Reacting to the news that emerged from the UK yesterday, Dr. Peter Haug, Director General of FORATOM commented: "The announcement made by the UK, which was a pioneer of nuclear energy in Europe and still produces 20% of its domestic electricity from nuclear energy, is a farsighted and inspired move that the whole of Europe will take note of. After Finland and France, the UK is the third European country to launch a national energy review that promotes nuclear, within an energy mix that includes renewables, as the best option for meeting security of supply and climate change challenges. The UK announcement is also in line with economic reality, bearing in mind the results of recent cost-effectiveness studies carried out across Europe, which have shown that nuclear energy, with its high-capacity factor and stable prices, is a very competitive energy option."

The recent EU Energy Green Paper helped to underline the need for a non-ideological debate on nuclear energy. This followed on from the call for a common European energy policy that Tony Blair made at the Hampton Court Summit. The fact that seven current or future EU Member States have launched nuclear new build programmes should encourage the EU to give extra consideration to nuclear energy in its common energy policy. Dr. Haug added: "At a time when the nuclear

renaissance in Europe is gathering momentum and when the US, India, and China are committed to expanding their nuclear industries, it would be inconceivable for the future energy policy of the EU to move forward without nuclear as a pillar of that policy. While nuclear is not the only solution, there is no solution without nuclear.”

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