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## **Energy White Paper recommends the UK should invest in a nuclear tomorrow**

**The publication today of the UK government's Energy White Paper, *Meeting the Energy Challenge*, reiterates its backing for "serious consideration" of the nuclear power option and emphasises the "significant role" that nuclear plays, alongside increased investment in renewables and greater energy efficiency, in Britain's future energy strategy. The 2006 Energy Review had signalled the British government's support for consultation on the re-launching of its nuclear programme, which it sees as a major component of a strategy aimed at securing Britain's energy supply, reducing its dependence upon imported oil and gas and combating climate change. Today's White Paper reinforces that support and signals the start of a consultation process that could result, before the end of the year, in the dawning of a new nuclear age in the UK.**

The main recommendations to emerge from today's much-anticipated UK Energy White Paper are a broad-ranging consultation on the option of building nuclear power plants, a concerted drive to promote greater energy efficiency and further investment in renewable energies like wind and tidal power. The main thrust of the measures outlined in the Energy White Paper is to meet urgent security of supply and climate change challenges. In a statement to the House of Commons, Trade and Industry Secretary Alistair Darling said: "We face two big challenges – climate change and maintaining a stable and affordable energy supply in an increasingly unstable world. The Energy White Paper sets out a long term framework for action to address these challenges." In a chapter dedicated to nuclear power the Energy White Paper states that: "New nuclear power stations could make an important contribution...to meeting our needs for low-carbon electricity generation and energy security in this period and beyond to 2050." Underlining the economic advantages of pursuing the nuclear option, the Energy White Paper states: "There would also be a risk of higher costs to the UK economy by excluding nuclear as an option."

In addition to the consultation process on nuclear power, which will be concluded on 10 October 2007, the White Paper outlines how the government is proceeding "...with a range of facilitative actions to reduce regulatory and planning risks to prepare for the possibility that the government concludes it is in the public's interest to allow private sector companies the option of investing in new nuclear power stations." Such investment should take place within a market-based framework. Indeed, according to the UK government, some energy companies "...have already expressed a strong interest in investing in new nuclear power plants."

Reacting to the Energy White Paper, Santiago San Antonio, Director General of FORATOM\* said: "Britain was the pioneer of nuclear energy back in the 1950s and the fact that it is on the verge of re-launching its nuclear sector is a highly significant development. The British government's recommendations mirror similar moves made by other European governments to review their nuclear policy. It also sends out a positive signal to a potential investor that now is the time to go nuclear again, and proves that the global revival of nuclear power will be sustained in the long term. We hope that these recommendations will prove to be a catalyst for the finalising of a European energy strategy."

To consult the Energy White Paper click on the following link: <http://www.dtistats.net/ewp/>

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(\*) FORATOM is the trade association representing the European nuclear industry.