

FORATOM welcomes new forum for sustainable nuclear research

FORATOM, the trade association representing the European nuclear industry, has welcomed the launch on 21 September 2007, in Brussels, of the Sustainable Nuclear Energy Technology Platform (SNETP) and the enhanced role it gives to the nuclear industry. The SNETP aims to facilitate closer integration between researchers and industry, as well as to maintain Europe's R&D leadership in the nuclear research sector. It will also provide nuclear energy's contribution to the European Commission's (EC) Strategic Energy Technology Plan, which aims to develop research into all low-carbon technologies.

The SNETP was launched by the European Science and Research Commissioner, Janez Potocnik, before a large gathering of researchers, politicians, industry representatives and environmental groups. This reflected how the SNETP will involve a broad range of stakeholders in identifying and implementing a new vision for the future of nuclear energy in the EU. An EC strategic document entitled *SNETP: A Vision Report* was published. This report, which was compiled with the support of industry, research centres and the Euratom Scientific and Technical Committee, underlines the special contribution made by nuclear energy to ensuring security of energy supply, promoting competitiveness and fighting climate change. It also provides a roadmap for the creation of the SRA (Strategic Research Agenda), highlighting the start-up, by 2020, of a new breed of fast reactors (Generation IV), advanced recycling processes and the production of alternative fuels, like hydrogen. The report also stresses the need for increased resources for education and training in nuclear engineering.

Commissioner Potocnik reiterated the pivotal role that nuclear energy has to play in the EU's energy mix and stressed that "...nuclear power will be a very important part of their solution to security of supply and the reduction of greenhouse gases."

Commenting on the launch of the SNETP, Santiago San Antonio, Director General of FORATOM said: "Following on from the setting up of the High-Level Group on Safety and Radioactive Waste and the creation of ENEF, this latest initiative to be launched by the EC further endorses nuclear energy's key role in the EU's energy mix and in solving the problems of security of supply and climate change that set today's global agenda. FORATOM has played an active part in the preparation of the *Vision Report*. The European industry will continue to play a role, through FORATOM's membership of the SNETP's Secretariat, in helping to define the future direction of the EU's strategic R&D effort and in maintaining Europe's global leadership in nuclear science and research."

For further information contact Mark O'Donovan of FORATOM at: Tel. 02/505 32 26; email: mark.odonovan@foratom.org