



EUROPEAN COMMISSION - PRESS RELEASE

Nuclear safety: EU will give extra €500 million for the decommissioning of old Soviet type nuclear reactors

Brussels, 24 November 2011 - The European Commission has today proposed to provide further EU assistance of €500 million to support the decommissioning in Bulgaria, Lithuania and Slovakia. These funds will contribute to the continuation of safe decommissioning of the nuclear power plants Kozloduy, Ignalina and Bohunice. This new financial assistance should support the efforts of the three Member States who are ultimately responsible for nuclear safety, including the financing of decommissioning.

EU Commissioner for energy Günther Oettinger said: *"It is in our citizens' interest, that these reactors will be safely decommissioned and that they will never be restarted again. This additional financial support will help the three Member States to timely progress in defueling and decommissioning of these nuclear reactors. This is a clear expression of solidarity of the EU, which has put nuclear safety as a priority."*

The Union assistance for decommissioning of nuclear power plants aims at reaching an irreversible state in the decommissioning process and eliminating the major source of radiological hazard. The proposal foresees for Bulgaria additional €185 million until 2020, for Lithuania €210 million until 2017 and for Slovakia €105 million until 2017 (in 2011 prices).

Before the Union financial support will be provided, Bulgaria, Slovakia and Lithuania will have to meet certain conditions:

- EU legislation on nuclear safety and on the management of nuclear waste has to be fully implemented.
- The Member States have to create legal frameworks for the timely accumulation of national financial resources to cover the remaining financial needs. This will make sure that the Member States will be able to gradually take over the necessary financing responsibilities.
- Revised detailed decommissioning plans have to be submitted to the Commission. Those plans will be the basis for monitoring the implementation of the financial assistance from the Union.

Background:

As a precondition for the accession to the EU, Bulgaria, Lithuania and Slovakia had to commit themselves to close and subsequently decommission its nuclear reactors Kozloduy units 1 to 4, Ignalina units 1 and 2 and Bohunice V1 units 1 and 2. All three Member States fulfilled their obligations and all the reactor units were closed down in due time.

The EU committed itself to provide some financial assistance for the decommissioning of these reactors as an expression of European solidarity. The EU has not committed itself to cover the total amount of costs. The proposed 500 million Euro comes on top of what has already been committed. The total financial assistance from the EU to the three Member States until the end of 2013 foresees €2 847.8 million in current prices (€1 367 million for Lithuania, €613 million for Slovakia and €867.8 million for Bulgaria).

The Commission's proposal to provide additional financial assistance beyond 2014 contributes to the overall nuclear safety within the EU. It allows to better follow-up the full completion of the decommissioning as the amounts and the distribution will be linked to the progress achieved.

Further information:

For more information on decommissioning see DG energy website:

http://ec.europa.eu/energy/nuclear/decommissioning/decommissioning_en.htm

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