

Press Release  
Helsinki, Finland, 11/11/07

**Experts and NGO-participants from Finland, Austria, Belgium, Belarus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine and United States attended an Anti-Nuclear Manifestation in Helsinki Finland this weekend.**

International experts on nuclear and renewable energy policy had special meetings with senior officials at the Environment and Trade and Industry ministries, as well as a packed public hearing with politicians and some nuclear industry officials at the Parliament on Friday.

### **Climate Change and Nuclear power: more problems, no solution**

According to the Intergovernmental Panel of Climate Change (IPCC 2007) climate change is already here and climate change will continue to intensify during this century. This was recently confirmed by the latest report of the International Energy Agency (IEA) (7.11.2007). Global greenhouse gases will continue to increase in the coming decades, therefore it is clear, based on the IPCC reports predictions that global warming can not be stopped. Thus nuclear power will be an extra problem, not a solution, in an era of intensifying climate change.

Nuclear power will actually make matters worse the meeting of concludes. The IPCC fourth report and Arctic Climate Impact Assessment (ACIA 2004) proves that global warming is speeding up melting of glaciers all over the world, from Alps to Greenland, being the first concrete signals of the threat of sea level rise. Global sea level rise, combined with the sea level fluctuation in time of stronger storms cause security risks for nuclear power plants located on sea coasts. Another impact of climate change on nuclear plants will be the inadequate cooling water for plants located on rivers which dry up during much hotter summers, as has already happened in France and recently in the U.S.

Therefore, taking into account the precautionary principle, governments need to start prepare preventive actions against such combined climate and nuclear risks. These risks are made worse by the risks from nuclear activities: uranium mining, nuclear materials transportation, operating nuclear plants and storage of nuclear waste. Additionally, governments need to be prepared for different kinds of worst case scenarios related to climate change risks, even for rapid construction of protective barriers around reactors located at the seashore, just as they have had to strengthen physical protection of nuclear plants and transports since the 9/11 terrorist attacks.

Governments must take immediate concrete energy efficiency and alternative energy policy actions, not delay them, because of options to build new nuclear reactors. Examples, from Denmark, Spain and recently Scotland show that it is possible to reject new nuclear plans, and to start to invest in new generation renewable energy technologies and thus to increase employment and economic prosperity in home and foreign markets.

The fuel cycle of nuclear energy, from uranium mining to nuclear waste disposal, have to be as critically discussed as environmental and health impacts of biofuels have been recently discussed on the governmental level and in the media.

Scientific results and testimonies by local people from France, Niger, Namibia, Canada and the U.S show that uranium mining is one of the most polluting and dangerous activities of the nuclear fuel chain, contaminating the environment, including ground water, lakes, rivers and air. Extreme climate events as heavy rains will increase risk management of radioactive effluent and solid waste from uranium mines and processing (milling) factories. These issues need to be taken into account, when uranium exploration is undertaken in Finnish Lapland and Karelia by international companies.

Because of long-term health risks induced by ionizing radiation (cancer, genetic problems) the implementation of regulations in the area of radioprotection should be made by independent experts, without pressure from the nuclear proponents. In this respect the nuclear related agreement between the WHO and the IAEA should immediately be cancelled.

Nuclear plants are a health risk. A recent German study showed significantly increased risks of childhood cancer near nuclear power plants. An official study to confirm the findings is under way. The presentation of the results is expected for early 2008.

Participants of the conference were concerned that there are plans in Russia, Belarus, Ukraine and Armenia to build more nuclear energy. Experts raised concern about western uranium enrichment companies. Urenco and Eurodif must stop sending nuclear waste (depleted uranium hexafluoride) to Russia, where radioactive waste is not safely stored, but

is placed on sites placed in open fields, facing erosion and weather-related risks and posing a health risks for local residents. Experts expressed deep concern regarding the massive transportation of these uranium tails via the vulnerable Baltic Sea, which is already one of the most radioactively polluted seas of the world.

Conference experts highlighted that nuclear waste storage is not technically solved in the Olkiluoto planned waste deposit. The geological bedrock is not as solid, than it was preciously believed and further studies are needed by objective scientists.

Participants in the congress concluded, that if there is political will on the local, regional, national and international levels, it is possible to change the present unsustainable and risky energy system.

Additional information:

Some conference experts:

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**All conference speeches are available on the internet**  
<http://uraanitieto.tormunet.fi/encc>

## DECLARATION

On November 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> 2007 more than 140 energy, uranium mining and nuclear waste specialists and experts from 25 European countries and the USA gathered in Helsinki for the international “European Nuclear-Critical Conference”. The following declaration was agreed upon by the participants:

Nuclear power cannot provide a solution to climate change. It is dishonest to promote nuclear energy by arguing that it is free of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, since the nuclear industry does not include every step of the nuclear fuel cycle, starting with uranium mining and ending with the spent fuel disposal, in their CO<sub>2</sub> calculations. To construct new nuclear power plants would actually make the situation worse because of the risks from radioactive releases in all steps of the production of electricity from uranium. Moreover, handling the spent fuel is an unsolvable problem that will remain a threat to countless generations to come.

Our governments are urgently needed today to take concrete action for energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. Examples from Denmark, Spain and recently Scotland show that it is possible to reject new nuclear plans and instead invest in renewable energies. This will increase employment and economic prosperity both in domestic and foreign markets.

History has shown the negative impacts of uranium mining and milling on the environment and human health. The nuclear industry has violated human rights throughout the world, especially on lands and territories of Indigenous People where uranium is mined.

Because of long term health risks induced by ionising radiation (cancers, genetic problems and other diseases), the implementation of regulations in the area of radioprotection should be made by independent experts, without pressure from the nuclear proponents. A recent German study reported at the conference in Helsinki showed significantly increased risks of childhood cancer near nuclear power plants.

The dangerous radioactive sea transports need to be stopped. The western uranium enrichment companies, Urenco and Eurodif, need to stop sending nuclear waste (depleted uranium hexafluoride) to Russia, where radioactive waste is not safely stored but placed in the open field, facing erosion and weather-related risks, and posing health risks for local residents. According to the most competent experts from the Helsinki Commission the Baltic Sea is already the most radioactive sea in the whole world. KIMO, the international organisation of local authorities in coastal communities, has sharply protested against such shipments, which put millions of their coastal community citizens at great risk!

Conference experts highlighted that nuclear waste storages are not technically resolved in the planned final repositories for spent fuel of Finland and Sweden. Waste storages

should not be placed close to coastal areas, and problems will arise because the geological bedrock is not solid. Further studies need to be made by objective scientists.

Conference experts also showed that if there is political will on the local, regional, national and international levels, it is possible to change the present unsustainable and high risk energy system into a system of 100% renewable energy.