FORATOM
THE VOICE OF THE EUROPEAN NUCLEAR INDUSTRY

Press Release

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FORATOM outlines flexible nuclear solution to intermittent renewable challenge

Brussels, 7 May 2018: FORATOM has today outlined how flexible nuclear power plants are the best partners for variable renewable energy sources. This will help Europe achieve its two main goals: ensuring security of energy supplies whilst at the same time reducing its CO_2 emissions.

Renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar, are one of the tools available which can help Europe decarbonise its electricity system. The challenge which they face today is their intermittent nature, given that they depend on the sun shining and the wind blowing. Hence why they need to be combined with other sources of low-carbon energy – such as nuclear, the only large-scale form of electricity production which is not weather dependent.

"If Europe is serious about reducing its CO_2 emissions whilst at the same time ensuring security of supply, then it needs to take low-carbon nuclear energy seriously as a flexible partner for renewables" states Yves Desbazeille, FORATOM Director General.

Today, the general misconception is that nuclear can only provide a baseload solution. But this is not necessarily the case, as nuclear power can also be flexible. It can provide a large-scale solution to the need for network stability and flexibility. By combining intermittent renewables with flexible nuclear, Europe will decarbonise its electricity system, whilst at the same time ensuring security of supply – at an affordable cost!

As highlighted by Andrei Goicea, FORATOM Executive Manager, *"when it comes to nuclear flexibility, two elements need to be taken into consideration: the regulatory framework (which can vary from one Member State to another), and the market environment."*

With this in mind, FORATOM calls for an EU energy policy which ensures:

- a well-functioning electricity market recognizing the specificities of long-term investments in low-carbon energy sources
- a functioning EU ETS which delivers a long-term and predictable carbon price
- the implementation of appropriate mechanisms to reward flexible operation in a system containing an increasing proportion of intermittent renewables

Check out our latest Position Paper to find out more about the flexible operation of nuclear power plants!

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