



**Friends of
the Earth
Europe**

Letter of solidarity with the antinuclear movement in Poland

We want to express our strong support to the Polish antinuclear movement. We are informed about the plans of the Polish government to construct the first nuclear power plant. There seems to be some tendency to underestimate the risks of nuclear power under current political and economic reality.

The decision for or against nuclear should not be taken under the influence of the massive pronuclear campaign we see in the media as nuclear industry is struggling for survival.

We want to point out, that the basic problems of nuclear energy are unsolved:

- still no final repository for nuclear waste exists after over 50 years of commercial nuclear power generation
 - the “residual” risk of a catastrophic accident which would kill many people and contaminate large parts of Europe as much as Chernobyl did or worse cannot be excluded
 - nuclear accident liability is very far from adequate, so damage in the end always will be covered by the taxpayer
 - NPP construction cost overruns are still a fact which was not solved in the last decades, e.g. the cost overrun of the EPR project Olkiluoto in Finland reached 47% in March 2009 (the only NPP actually under construction in the EU)
- new risks
- the current situation on the financial markets make long term projects very expensive or impossible without very strong public money support, this is very true for nuclear power plant projects with lead time of 10 years and construction time of around 10 years as well
 - uranium supply: uranium is neither abundant nor will it last for ever; depending on the source, estimates reach from 30 to 70 years until uranium runs out;
 - dependency on nuclear fuel suppliers abroad cannot be overcome by mining own uranium in Poland; enrichment and fuel fabrication facilities are located in Europe only in UK, France, however, the likeliest supplier would probably be Russia.

Additionally Poland would need to establish a complete nuclear infrastructure from scratch – regulator, universities, TSOs (Technical Support Organizations). Nuclear makes a country more vulnerable: threat of sabotage and terrorism, aircrafts accidents, war.

However, knowing that already in 1990 in Żarnowiec common sense gained victory in the end, we believe this time it should win again and lead to Polish energy sector development based on renewable sources and energy efficiency measures.

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In Brussels, April 24 2009