

WRITTEN QUESTION E-0365/07  
by Jiří Maštálka (GUE/NGL)  
to the Commission

Subject: Lithuania's intention to convert the Ignalina nuclear power plant into a radioactive waste storage facility

In the course of my visits to Belarus, I have been informed of Lithuania's intention to construct a radioactive waste storage facility by converting the current Ignalina nuclear power plant for this purpose.

A number of questions arise in relation to this project:

1. As a Member State of the European Union, is Lithuania required to comply with the provisions of Council Directive 96/29/Euratom<sup>1</sup>, Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council<sup>2</sup> and the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Article 37), which clearly define the procedure for approval by European structures of the building of such facilities?

2. Under Council Directive EC 97/11/EC<sup>3</sup> and Directive 2001/42/EC, EU Member States are required to provide information and to consult other Member States on projects of this kind, and to fulfil a range of conditions (geological, hydrological, ecological and demographic) when selecting a location for such facilities. Has Lithuania fulfilled these conditions?

It is my belief that Lithuania has not yet conducted any thorough hydrogeological and seismological surveys in the area. The Ignalina power plant itself and the area required for the construction of the nuclear waste storage facility are situated in a tectonic fault zone in direct proximity to the Daugavpils seismological zone. Furthermore, the proximity of the Drisvyata, Desna and Western Dvina rivers may lead to radioactive substances entering subterranean waters and consequently contaminating the sea.

3. Under the 1991 Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and the 1998 Convention on Access to Information, all signatories have the right to receive detailed information when facilities of this kind that might have a direct impact on the environment are being planned and constructed. To what extent has Belarus been informed?

In this connection, I should like to urge the European Commission, and in particular the office of Commissioner responsible, to take all the necessary steps to ensure that the Belarusian national authorities and citizens are fully informed, if possible going beyond the scope of the above international agreements.

Thank you for providing swift and detailed information on the above matters.

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<sup>1</sup> OJ L 159, 29.6.1996, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup> OJ L 197, 21.7.2001, p. 30.

<sup>3</sup> OJ L 73, 14.3.1997, p. 5.