



EUROPEAN COMMISSION

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Dear President,

The Commission would like to thank the Nationalrat for its Opinion concerning the agenda of the recent European Council of 22nd May 2013 and the current consultation on the Green Paper "A framework for the climate and energy policy until 2030" {COM(2013) 169 final}, respectively.

The European Commission considers that using nuclear energy is a way to limit or reduce the emission of CO₂ in electricity production. Since the accident in Fukushima, public policy on nuclear energy has changed in some Member States while others continue to use, or plan new investments in, nuclear energy. The Commission is neutral on these decisions, but aims to ensure that when nuclear energy is used in the EU, it is meeting the highest safety standards.

In response to the Fukushima accident, the Commission initiated a "stress test" process, which verified the safety of nuclear power plants within the EU and in neighbouring countries against impact from extreme external events.

The Commission has recently tabled the draft proposal for a revised nuclear safety Directive and submitted it to the European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) for opinion, as foreseen by the EURATOM Treaty. Following the EESC opinion the Commission will table its final proposal. The draft proposal includes lessons learned from the Fukushima accident and the European "stress tests". Furthermore, the Commission is undertaking work in the field of nuclear emergency preparedness and response.

Regarding Carbon Capture and Storage, given the role that fossil fuels play in the global and European energy mix, and CO₂-emission in many industrial processes, the European Commission considers, in its Communication on the Future of Carbon Capture and Storage in Europe {COM (2013) 180 final}, that in the transition to a fully low-carbon economy, the Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) technology is one of the key ways to reconcile the rising demand for fossil fuels, with the need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

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The Commission hopes that these clarifications address the concerns raised by the Nationalrat and looks forward to continuing our political dialogue in the future.

Yours faithfully,

*Maroš Šefčovič
Vice-President*