

Urgent call for action:

Making use of the Conference on the Future of Europe for reforming or abolishing the EURATOM Treaty

Brussels, 6 October 2020

Dear Mrs. President of the EU Commission von der Leyen,

Dear Mr. President of the European Council Michel,

In your application speech for your current position held on 16 July 2019, you have passionately advocated a united, fair and equal Europe that is developing strong and ambitious solutions to the climate crisis.

We welcome the commitment and energy you are putting into the implementation of the Green Deal. In order to achieve a carbon-neutral European Union until 2050 with a clean, resource efficient and competitive economy, you are focusing on fair and inclusive transitions for everyone.

One of the main European Treaties, the EURATOM-Treaty, diametrically opposes your efforts.

On 25 March 1957, the treaty for establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (EURATOM) was signed in Rome - at the same time as the treaty establishing the European Economic Community (EEC). The "Roman Treaties" are the foundation of today's European Union. While the EEC-Treaty has been reformed several times (EEC - EC - TFEU-Treaty), the EURATOM-Treaty has remained unchanged since 1957.

- Its main aim is the development of a powerful European nuclear industry. Nuclear energy "represents an essential resource for the development and invigoration of industry and will permit the advancement of the cause of peace" - up to this day. This also applies to 14 member states that have never operated nuclear power plants or that have decided to phase out nuclear energy as well as to those that reject the technology constitutionally. Euratom-Programmes are funded by the general EU budget.
- Its primary legal status induces EU-secondary law & legitimates a network of respective institutions

Our concerns at a glance:

EURATOM is not up-to-date. General conditions in the energy sector as well as the socio-political acceptance of nuclear energy have changed considerably since 1957. It is a high-risk-technology that cannot be managed as severe accidents, the resulting and still lasting tragedies have proven. The danger of radioactive contamination is present in every moment – also in Europe.

EURATOM distorts competition in the energy sector. Since 1957 EURATOM legally and politically favours one single form of energy. Without subsidies, nuclear energy would be too expensive to compete with renewables.

EURATOM unilaterally binds important research funds. The EURATOM *Research and Training Programme* of the European Atomic Energy Community channels European research activities to nuclear energy (like nuclear fusion, transmutation, generation IV reactors). In this way it discriminates against more innovative research projects that could be implemented faster in the fields of renewable energy, energy saving, efficiency and storage.

EURATOM is not democratic. The European Parliament has no decision making power in these matters, for example the volume of the EURATOM budget.

EURATOM does not promote the implementation of security standards. 63 years after its foundation there are neither uniform nor adequately strict security requirements in the European nuclear sector.

EURATOM favours a form of energy that is not climate friendly. Nuclear energy is neither sustainable nor carbon-neutral. Greenhouse gas emissions accrue along the entire fuel chain: from uranium mining and enrichment to energy-intensive plant construction to waste treatment and storage.

EURATOM inhibits preventive environmental and health policies and undermines the green imperative "do no harm". Uranium exploration and -mining subject whole areas to radioactive contamination – they leave unsafe radioactive and chemotoxic sludge and waste piles. The nuclear industry robs the local population of their livelihoods. Alleged “normal” operation of nuclear plants burdens citizens with radioactive contamination, let alone unmanageable nuclear catastrophes. Paradoxically, the public is bearing all the risks of that form of energy generation - without being asked. The unsolvable problem of nuclear waste endangers future generations in a distinctively undemocratic way and eternally.

For the reasons mentioned, it is now up to us to appeal to you with passion. A Europe that strives to overcome climate and environmental and - above all - human rights challenges is only possible without nuclear energy.

We therefore ask you to take the necessary steps to reform or abolish EURATOM against the backdrop of the Conference on the Future of Europe.

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