

Resolution 405 (1969)¹

Reply to the 10th report on the activities of the European Nuclear Energy Agency

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Thanks the Council of OECD for the transmission of the 10th annual report on the activities of the European Nuclear Energy Agency ;
2. Welcomes the increasing dialogue between ENEA and interested industrial European circles with regard to certain aspects of the Agency's work, and is convinced that this will contribute to the creation of a Europe-wide nuclear industry ;
3. Warmly welcomes the formal extension of the Dragon Joint Nuclear Reactor Project until April 1970 ; recalls the rigorous economic criteria which have been applied to the assessment of the results so far obtained, and the promise these assessments have given of reducing the future costs of generation of nuclear electric power on a commercial scale ; and notes with satisfaction the formation of a European Consortium with a view to submitting tenders for the construction on a commercial scale of high temperature gas cooled reactors based on Dragon techniques ;
4. Similarly conscious of the value of the Halden Joint Nuclear Reactor Project as a test-bed enabling Members to carry out collectively practical experiments with a view to establishing which are the most promising means of reducing future nuclear electric power costs on a commercial scale, profoundly hopes that negotiations now in progress will lead to a further extension of the Project beyond its present expiry date of 31 December 1969 ;
5. Noting that its comments in previous years drawing attention to the fact that there was a very real possibility that the Eurochemic Commercial Nuclear Fuel Reprocessing Plant would operate at loss because of the existence of over-capacity for nuclear fuel reprocessing in Europe have been overwhelmingly confirmed in the event ; conscious however that considerations other than those of a strictly commercial character arise ; having welcomed in [Resolution 363 \(1968\)](#) the decision of governments participating in the Eurochemic Project "to undertake at once, a study of the conditions under which Eurochemic should operate in future (which will) attempt to assess the value of continued operation of the Plant beyond 1969 and to consider what changes, if any, seem appropriate in the Company's objectives and structure", awaits with the greatest interest the publication of the study ;
6. Conscious that, having regard to the steady increase in the level of peaceful nuclear operations in Europe, the quantity of long-life radioactive wastes which must be safely disposed of will inevitably grow rapidly ; aware of the many technical and political problems which arise in the context of finding safe and economic methods of disposing of such wastes, particularly where solid and relatively bulky items are concerned ; convinced that in many cases the finding of solutions can be greatly facilitated by a common European effort ; congratulates ENEA on the success of the operation it carried out in the summer of 1967 on the collective disposal of solid or solidified radioactive wastes into the Atlantic Ocean, and believes that such collective operations should be repeated under ENEA auspices in future years ;

1. Assembly debate on 31 January 1969 (27th Sitting) (see [Doc. 2493](#), report of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development). Text adopted by the Assembly on 31 January 1969 (27th Sitting).



7. Welcomes the information contained in paragraph 206 of the 10th report insofar as it indicates there has been a trend for some years towards a continuing reduction in levels of environmental radioactivity ;
8. Warmly welcomes the attention which ENEA has been giving to the question of free-world resources of uranium and thorium and to the likely trend of their prices ; and trusts that, having regard to their importance for determining the most economic combination of different types of nuclear reactor, the studies already undertaken will be regularly brought up-to-date ;
9. Having followed with interest the work so far carried out by ENEA into coolants for fast reactors other than liquid sodium, would be disposed to support a co-operative European Research Project under ENEA auspices in this sense, provided that the specialist investigations now in course suggest that such alternatives had substantial commercial promise ;
10. Notes the concern expressed by ENEA that the development of certain types of reactor (in particular those belonging to the heavy water family) has not been carried anything like so far as that of other types ; further notes that ENEA believes that as a result their capital costs have tended to remain high, and that this factor, coupled with a comparative lack of practical experience, has for the moment placed them outside the range of preference of most electricity producers ; and holds that it is desirable to undertake studies which will elucidate the technical and economic factors at issue ;
11. Conscious of the phenomenal growth in the volume of information relating to nuclear energy, and of the consequent necessity to ensure by collective efforts the classification, storage, and communication on request of such scientific, technical and economic information, congratulates ENEA not only on the continued progress it has itself made in this field but also on the contribution it has made so far as Europe is concerned to the work now being undertaken in this respect by the International Atomic Energy Agency ;
12. Records its satisfaction at the entry into force of the OECD Convention of 1960 on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy (as amended by the Additional Protocol of January 1964), and welcomes ENEA's continuing efforts to harmonise its practical application in member countries ;
13. Considering the prospects for worldwide availabilities of low cost energy, in particular of liquid fuels and natural gas ; welcoming the sense of realism which characterises the activities of ENEA ; believes it to be essential that these activities continue to be integrated into the more general studies on foreseeable demand and supply for energy as a whole which are carried out by the OECD and other international intergovernmental bodies.