



Resolution 1157 (1998)¹

Radioactive waste management

Parliamentary Assembly

1. Constant public concern about the safety of nuclear energy has motivated the long-standing interest shown in this matter by the Parliamentary Assembly which has presented a series of recommendations to member governments on different aspects of the issue. The problem of radioactive waste is an integral part of the safety of nuclear energy and its management deserves careful consideration.
2. The Assembly considers that radioactive waste management calls for closer international co-operation and that each country using civil nuclear energy has to settle, by its own means, the problem of waste produced.
3. The Assembly recalls the main environmental principles regarding the management of radioactive waste as laid down in the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, Agenda 21, the United Nations Intergovernmental Conference to Adopt a Global Programme of Action for the Protection of the Marine Environment from Land Based Activities of 23 October to 3 November 1995, and the resolution of the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted at its nineteenth special session (23-27 June 1997 – UN GA/9333).
4. The public often receives inadequate information, leading to a lack of proper understanding of the nuclear sector.
5. The public authorities and the companies that treat radioactive waste must provide information on the current state of, and progress in, waste management – particularly the scientific, technical, institutional, economic, environmental and ethical aspects.
6. The Assembly therefore calls on Council of Europe member states:
 - 6.1. to ensure that all operations in the nuclear energy production chain that are linked to waste comply with the safety standards and principles drawn up by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). These also contain fundamental principles for the protection of, and burdens on, future generations;
 - 6.2. to accept and promote the principle that states that generate radioactive wastes have the responsibility to ensure their safe storage and disposal, and that, in general, radioactive wastes should be disposed of in the territory of the state in which they are generated as far as is compatible with the safe management of such material;
 - 6.3. to intensify safety measures with regard to radioactive wastes and, in particular, not to allow the storage or disposal of high-level, intermediate or low-level radioactive wastes near the marine environment unless scientific evidence, consistent with the applicable internationally agreed principles and guidelines, shows that such storage or disposal poses no risk to people or the marine environment and does not interfere with other legitimate uses of the sea;
 - 6.4. to continue their support of, and co-operation with, international organisations dealing with radioactive waste management and to insist on the continuous improvement of treatment technologies, by adopting as a priority aim the minimisation of the quantities and radiological and chemical toxicity of waste;

1. Assembly debate on 24 April 1998 (16th Sitting) (see [Doc. 8054](#), report of the Committee on Science and Technology, rapporteur: Mr Prokes). Text adopted by the Assembly on 24 April 1998 (16th Sitting).



- 6.5. to pay particular attention to radioactive waste originating from disused nuclear power stations, and from the reactors of decommissioned nuclear-powered ships and submarines as well as from abandoned military sites;
- 6.6. to display vigilance with regard to the transportation of nuclear materials on passenger-carrying aeroplanes and ships;
- 6.7. to encourage international co-operation on transmutation of radioactive high-level and long-lived waste;
- 6.8. to give objective information to the public on all matters concerning the nuclear sector and to show greater transparency in the field of radioactive waste management, so as to avoid inaccurate information;
- 6.9. to take all possible steps to ensure that the public is properly informed about the measures adopted for managing different types of waste in the short, medium and long term;
- 6.10. to ensure that the illegal transport and storage of radioactive waste are completely stopped;
- 6.11. to take all possible steps to minimise radioactive discharges into the marine environment with the ultimate aim of preventing, reducing or eliminating pollution of the marine and coastal environment by human-enhanced levels of radioactive substances;
- 6.12. to ensure that marine transport of radioactive waste is kept to a minimum, and when such transport is conducted, to ensure that the Irradiated Nuclear Fuel Code is kept as a minimal standard;
- 6.13. to study the technical, economic and political feasibility of the creation of international repositories for radioactive waste;
- 6.14. to continue active and effective international co-operation, so as to avoid a doubling of work and the wasting of financial, intellectual and scientific resources in solving the problem of long-term storage of nuclear waste;
- 6.15. to sign, ratify and put into practice the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, elaborated under the auspices of the IAEA;
- 6.16. to co-operate with the appropriate international organisations in research programmes for improving the methods and technology of radioactive waste management.