

Resolution 711 (1979)¹

Reply to the 6th and 7th activity reports of the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency (1977 and 1978)

Parliamentary Assembly

The Assembly,

1. Having examined the 6th and 7th activity reports, for 1977 and 1978, of the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency, and noting that one of the Agency's primary objectives is to promote co-operation between member governments in assessing the future role of nuclear energy as a contributor to economic progress ;
2. Welcoming the part played by the Agency following the Harrisburg accident in providing for a full exchange of views and information between the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the safety and regulatory authorities of other member states ;
3. Noting with concern that according to current forecasts Western Europe will remain heavily dependent on imported oil through to the 1990s, and thus politically and strategically vulnerable to events in the oil-producing regions of the world - the situation being similar in regard to supplies of uranium ;
4. Convinced that strong measures must be taken now for there to be any prospect of redressing the situation by the year 2000 ;
5. Considering that in the medium term it is not possible - without damage to economic and social development - to avoid having recourse to the present generation of nuclear thermal reactors, but that stronger policies of energy conservation must be simultaneously applied ;
6. Considering, however, that in the longer term (beyond the year 2000) the role of nuclear energy must be assessed according to the possibility of breaking the present strong linkage between economic growth, which remains indispensable, and energy consumption, a. by a far more rational use of energy, b. by far more efficient ways of burning and handling coal, and c. by a contribution from renewable energies ;
7. Believing that - pending completion of such assessments of the longer-term role of nuclear energy, and in the light of current estimates of world uranium reserves - research into advanced converter and breeder technologies must be continued, but that, given their environmental and economic implications, decisions on having recourse to these technologies should only be taken following wide democratic debate ;
8. Recognising that public opinion should be a determining factor in shaping decisions on technology in a democratic society ;
9. Welcoming the organisation within the framework of its Exercise in Scientific Co-operation of the 4th Public Parliamentary Hearing (Brussels, 18-19 December 1979) on safety and economic aspects of the fast breeder reactor,
10. Calls on the governments co-operating in the framework of the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency :
 - 10.1. to strengthen their nuclear safety programmes, and plant operating and inspection procedures and practices in the light of the lessons to be drawn from the Harrisburg accident ;

1. Assembly debate on 5 October 1979 (12th Sitting) (see [Doc. 4407](#), report of the Legal Affairs Committee). Text adopted by the Assembly on 5 October 1979 (12th Sitting).



10.2. to conduct and publish the results of studies on the overall implications for our economies of the investments required for recourse to the nuclear option, as compared with investments on a comparable scale in energy conservation and the rational use of energy, in new techniques for converting and using coal, and in the development of renewable sources of energy ;

10.3. to recognise that nuclear energy is not likely to obtain wide public acceptance unless the need for it and the accompanying safety precautions are properly explained, and for this purpose to invite the Agency :

- a. to intensify its efforts to promote international co-operation in nuclear safety throughout all phases of the nuclear fuel cycle ;
- b. to examine ways of responding more effectively to the information needs of parliamentarians at national and international levels and of regionally and locally elected representatives.