

Commission issues its opinion on units 3 and 4 of the Slovak Nuclear Power Plant of Mochovce

The Commission has issued today its opinion on the project of Slovenské Elektrárne to complete Units 3 and 4 of Mochovce Nuclear Power Plant in the Slovak Republic, according to the requirements of articles 41 to 44 of the Euratom Treaty. Those requirements state that any new investment related to nuclear activities has to be communicated to the Commission which should, in return, send its views to the Member State concerned.

During the notification procedure under the Euratom Treaty the Commission has held extensive discussions with the nuclear operator. The Commission concluded that, provided that the Commission's recommendations are implemented, the aspects of the investment in question are in line with the objectives of the Euratom Treaty.

Related to the special design of the Mochovce NPP, the Commission Viewpoint focuses in particular on the safety and security aspects.

In this regard, even though the project shows compliance with the current national regulations of the Slovak Republic as well as international recommendations, the Commission based its assessment on the best practice available and recommended a set of additional measures. This is due to the fact that the VVER 440/V213 reactors proposed by the investor do not have 'full containment' structure which is used in the most recent construction of nuclear power plants planned or under way in Europe.

The Commission considered that an equivalent level of protection as the one provided by a 'full containment' has to be ensured. In particular, the Commission recommended that the Investor – in close collaboration with the national authorities - "evaluates and implements additional features, functional capabilities and management strategies to withstand a potential deterministic impact from an external source (e.g. a malevolent small aircraft impact) into the design basis of the proposed investment, bringing the design in line with the existing best practices".

Furthermore, the Commission stresses the importance of diversification of supply sources under the aspect of secure supply of nuclear fuel for the whole EU nuclear industry as well as a correct management of decommissioning funds, in line with its recommendation¹.

The Commission will closely follow up on the development of the nuclear industrial activities related to the Mochovce investment project also in the future, notably its safety and security aspects.

¹ Commission Recommendation No 2006/851/Euratom; OJ L 330, 28.11.2006

Technical Background of the project

According to the notification received, the units 3 and 4 are pressurised water reactors with a power capacity of 440 MWe. The two units which will provide a total installed electrical power of 880 MW, type VVER 440/V213 of Russian Design. Commissioning of the 2 units is expected for 2012-2013. The amount to be invested is around 1.6 billion EUR.