



To the President, Vice-Presidents and
Members of the European Commission

Brussels, Thursday 27 March, 2003.



Dear Commissioners,

FUTURE OF EURATOM

We understand the Commission will soon discuss the future of the Euratom Treaty, following recent proposals from the Praesidium of the Convention.

The Praesidium proposal essentially recommends the inclusion of Euratom without any substantive changes into a new Constitutional Treaty. Such a move would be totally unacceptable to the Green-8 and the wider environmental movement, and so we respectfully call on you to reject it.

Instead, we believe the Praesidium and the Convention should recommend the abolition of the Euratom Treaty in its current form. Such a radical overhaul would remove the Treaty's promotional aspects whilst retaining necessary provisions on safety and security. We respectfully ask you to encourage the Convention to take such a route, and point to the extant Contribution by Nagy et al (CONV 563) as an illustration of this.

Euratom has remained unreformed and undemocratic since its inception in 1957, a time when nuclear power was perceived as a panacea to many challenges facing the world. History has shown this was not the case either then or now, as the majority of EU states either never developed or do not now want nuclear generation. Nevertheless, the bias inherent in Euratom leads to a continued distortion of energy markets thus seriously undermining the aim of fair competition. The following specific elements of Euratom would, if the Praesidium proposal prevails, become a part of a new Constitution:

- The requirement to promote nuclear power;
- The separate nuclear research and development budget;
- The absence of co-decision with the European Parliament;
- Cheap finance (i.e. subsidy) through the Euratom Loan facility.

There is little doubt that, if a new draft Constitution were to include the promotion of nuclear power, the likelihood of its acceptance by European citizens could be significantly diminished. The handling of the Euratom issue is therefore of key importance for the credibility of the Convention process, for the future energy and other policies of the EU, and in relation to the important framework for environmental protection and integration set out in the Treaty of Amsterdam.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. In view of the significant public interest in nuclear matters, we may opt to release this letter in due course.

Yours sincerely,

Martin Rocholl, Director, Friends of the Earth Europe

Also on behalf of

John Hontelez, Secretary General, European Environmental Bureau
Claire Papazoglou, Acting Head European Community Office, BirdLife International
Karla Schoeters, Director, Climate Action Network Europe
Manfred Pils, Secretary General, Friends of Nature International
John Bowler, Clean Energy Europe, Greenpeace International
Beatrice Schell, Director, European Federation for Transport and Environment
Tony Long, Director, WWF European Policy Office



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