

Presentation: Transatlantic Agenda for Global Nuclear Governance

R. Andreas Kraemer, Potsdam, Germany, 5 March 2010

The US and the EU should admit their errors concerning nuclear power and proliferation, calling them "costly mistakes", commit to investing in renewable energies and smart grids, phase out nuclear power, initiate negotiations to amend the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the Statute of the IAEA, and thus, in the interest of reducing the high security policy price of nuclear power, change the context for dealing with governments with aggressive nuclear programs such as Iran, North Korea or Pakistan.

"Towards a Nuclear Power Renaissance? – Challenges for Global Energy Governance" was the theme of the 7th Transatlantic Energy Governance Dialogue convened by the Global Public Policy Institute (GPPI) and the Brookings Institution, supported by the European Commission, in Potsdam, Germany, on 4 to 5 March 2010. R. Andreas Kraemer of Ecologic Institute offered his reflections on the proceedings and spoke about "A Transatlantic Agenda for Global Nuclear Governance" at the concluding panel. (Chatham House Rule applies.)

R. Andreas Kraemer's [Summary and Conclusions](#) highlighted these points:

- Nuclear power has enormous hidden costs. These are not reflected in the price of electricity generated by atomic power plants, and they are still largely ignored in the public and political debate.
- Nuclear power is not useful for attaining energy independence. It can only cover a small part of total energy needs and brings new kinds of dependencies, even for great powers.
- There is no convincing business case for building new nuclear power plants anywhere in the world. Nor is there a convincing case for updating or rehabilitating existing plants, especially in light of
 - limited availability of useful fissile material,
 - considerable risks involved at all stages of production,
 - very high legacy costs, imposed on thousands of future generations,
 - absence of secure long-term waste storage, and
 - additional risks and wastes resulting from reprocessing.
- In effect, the global market for new nuclear power plants, if a commercial market emerges at all, will be very limited because of costs, low acceptance, and the difficulties of building or adapting power grids that can accommodate such plants.

- Any newly built nuclear power plants need strong financial and political support from a military angle – a sort of "military subsidy" – in the form of a technological, economic and political context created by nuclear weapons programs. Just like existing plants at the time they were built, new-built plants cannot exist in an open and competitive market for electrical power.
- There is no way to avoid the proliferation of nuclear technology, including the capability of making nuclear weapons (by states) or "dirty bombs" (by terrorists, maybe state-sponsored); there is no "proliferation-proof" nuclear technology, reactor design, or regime to manage the fuel and waste cycle.
- As there is no economic justification for the civilian use of nuclear power, there is also no persuasive rationale for the "third pillar" of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, the right to "peacefully use nuclear technology".

Based on this summary and conclusion, R. Andreas Kraemer outlined the [Transatlantic Agenda for Global Nuclear Governance](#) with these points:

- The European Commission, the governments of the EU Member States and EU power utilities as well as the US federal government, state governments and power utilities should publicly admit that nuclear power
 - was, is, and will be a costly mistake. They should invite all OECD countries to support a public declaration to that effect.
 - has not and is not going to provide the means for energy independence.
 - has not developed into an industry that brings prosperity to people, and remains dependent on subsidies, credits and credit guarantees, and liability waivers from governments and tax payers, and.
 - presents hazards that cannot be controlled effectively: not in the operation of reactors, nor with respect to nuclear proliferation.
 - is not likely to be controlled by effective international cooperation that would bring risks to acceptable levels.
 - presents insurmountable challenges for regulatory control and democratic oversight.
 - can only be maintained at the price of excessive secrecy and is thus incompatible with an open, modern, and innovative society.

This admission should be accompanied with a declaration of unequivocal support for a transition to full renewable energy supply within the next 30 or 40 years, which is possible for both the US and its neighbors as well as the EU and the countries of the European Energy Community Treaty. Other countries should be supported in their access to technologies needed for renewable energy transformation.

- The European Commission, the governments of the EU Member States and EU power utilities as well as the US federal government, state governments and US power utilities should

- phase out nuclear power and transform power grids for distributed generation using renewable energies, storage and dynamic efficiency enabled by load-based tariffs as well as demand flexibility (smart grids);
- strengthen their engagement for nuclear disarmament, aiming to eliminate nuclear weapons from their arsenals, and encourage other countries to do likewise.
- The US should be the leader in providing honest economic analysis of the costs of nuclear power. This should form the basis for a "US-EU Nuclear Full Disclosure Project" covering:
 - Subsidies and similar aids, such as credits, credit guarantees, liability waivers etc. for nuclear research, construction, training, operation, and the fuel and waste cycle
 - Incidents and accidents, including full historical records.
- The US-EU Nuclear Full Disclosure Project should include all past, present and – as they become evident – future cases of wrongful non-disclosure, to and by regulators and elected officials, that presented or present challenges to effective regulatory and democratic control of the nuclear power industry. The project could then be enlarged to cover all other forms of energy, starting with coal, oil and gas, and eventually also renewable energies.
- The US should also lead in a full evaluation of the costs of necessary security policies, generally, for nuclear technology and, in particular, nuclear power. This evaluation should include the diplomatic, economic, trade-related, counter-terrorism, military and defense costs of dealing with countries such as Libya, Iraq, Iran, Pakistan, North Korea, who have used or are using nuclear power as a shield for developing nuclear weapons, or with groups, networks or movements such as Al-Qaeda.
- The EU should prepare to abolish the Treaty which established the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom Treaty) in the 1950s, and which was based on beliefs concerning atomic power that are now wholly discredited. (Any residual functions of the treaty can be maintained through the environmental, social, and energy sections of the Treaty which established the European Community as amended by the Treaty of Lisbon.)
- The US, the EU, and the EU Member States should then jointly renegotiate the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Statute of the International Atomic Energy Agency with the intention of assisting and rewarding nations that abandon nuclear power programs and phase out the operation of existing reactors, ensuring effective international oversight over residual fuels and wastes.

The result of these declarations, disclosures, and changes in policy and the energy economies of the US, the EU, and its Member States would remove the civilian veil over nuclear weapons programs and change the situation in all current and future negotiations with states that currently have or are developing nuclear power and weapons programs, changing the relationships with the states in question, notably Pakistan, Iran, and North Korea.

Further information on the Potsdam event is available at www.globalenergygovernance.net