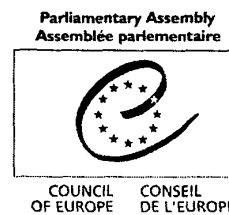


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REPORT

Eleventh sitting

Tuesday 26 April 2004 at 3 p.m.

In this report:

1. Speeches in English are reported in full.
2. Speeches in other languages are summarised.
3. Speeches in German and Italian are reproduced in full in a separate document.
4. Corrections should be handed in at Room 1059A not later than 24 hours after the report has been circulated.

The contents page for this sitting is given at the end of the verbatim report.

Mr van der Linden, President of the Assembly, took the Chair at 3.05 p.m.

THE PRESIDENT. – The sitting is open.

1. Adoption of the minutes

THE PRESIDENT. – The minutes of proceedings of the ninth sitting have been distributed.

Are the minutes agreed to?

They are agreed to.

2. Organisation of debates

THE PRESIDENT. – This afternoon, we have a large number of members wishing to speak, with debates on three reports for which there is a total of fifty speakers, and ten amendments to consider.

We will have to interrupt the list of speakers in the first debate at about 5.30 p.m. and the list of speakers in the second debate about 6.55 p.m. in order to leave sufficient time for the replies on behalf of the Committees and the votes. The second debate will start at about 5.45 p.m.

Are these arrangements agreed?

They are agreed.

3. Energy

THE PRESIDENT. – The first item of business this afternoon is the joint debate on the report on Europe's growing energy vulnerability, presented by Mr Berceanu of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, Document 10458, and the report on energy systems and the environment, presented by Mr Etherington on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, document 10486. After the speeches of the rapporteurs, Mr Mandil, executive director of the International Energy Agency, will make a statement.

The list of speakers closed at 5 p.m. yesterday. Thirty-five names are on the list.

I call Mr Berceanu, rapporteur for the first report. You have eight minutes.

Mr BERCEANU (*Romania*) thanked the President, expressed himself happy on behalf of the committee to present the report, and glad that the Assembly was having a joint debate with the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs. He said the topics of both committees were related and there was a single solution. Most greenhouse gases effected climate change that fell under the energy sector. He welcomed the forthcoming address of Mr Claude Mandil, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency. He wished to thank colleagues on the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development and the committee secretariat on their contribution to the report. Energy played a big part in daily life and the economic life of all countries. After the 1973 oil crisis, everyone had become aware of the vulnerability of their energy supply. Growing energy consumption and reducing resources meant that the vulnerability was increasing in Europe. The import of primary energy sources was becoming more difficult and costly because of world competitiveness. The surge in oil prices, with consequential increases for gas and coal costs, and geopolitical elements which jeopardised supplies were also factors.

Most countries wanted to meet Kyoto targets. He noted the very important ratification by Russia of Kyoto on 16 February 2005 and hoped that the four members of the Council of Europe which had not yet ratified the treaty, Turkey, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia-Montenegro, would do so.

The report was an attempt to draw lines towards decreasing energy vulnerability. One idea was to allow each country and region to choose its own energy mix to suits its needs. Some countries were rich in resources, while some had the necessary technology to exploit energy – for example, France, 70% of whose energy was met by nuclear power. The possibility of transferring and trading in Europe and throughout the world were good ways of reducing Europe's vulnerability. He asked why the Council of Europe should be discussing energy when its normal area was human rights. Having energy at fair prices in the third millennium was a human right.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Berceanu. I call Mr Etherington, *Rapporteur of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs.*

Mr ETHERINGTON (*United Kingdom*). – It is a great pleasure to follow the excellent report by my colleague. I do not think that anything in my report will in any way conflict with what he has said. I thank my colleagues on the committee for having the faith in me to allow me to present this important report on an issue that affects all of us, our children and grandchildren, and generations beyond.

We have been trying to draft this report for almost two years and there have been tremendous difficulties. As my colleague said, the real issue is that no two countries are in the same situation. We have had to try to draft a report that will make it possible for all countries to contribute to dealing with this problem. I do not exaggerate when I say that if we do not deal with it properly, we could see the end of this planet as a place not only of human life but of any life. One has only to look at Mars to see what Earth could become like if we do not succeed.

I often cite an illustration that I saw some two years ago, which was about the earth, the water on the planet and the atmosphere around the planet. If one imagines that the earth is about the size of a football, the amount of water on the planet was roughly the size of a child's glass marble – in the north-east we used to call them glass alleys, but not many of you will know that term – and the atmosphere was not much bigger, being rather smaller than a golf ball. Our planet is a very delicate object and we have tended to take it too much for granted. The committee has come to the conclusion, beyond any doubt, that carbon emissions and the burning of fossil fuels are indeed affecting and damaging the atmosphere.

Having started from that point, one has to move on to decide what is to be done about it. It is fairly simple and straightforward: we have to do something to try to cut carbon emissions and to ameliorate the damage that we are doing to the atmosphere. That will be more difficult for some nations than others. We spent a lot of time talking about the possibilities of nuclear energy. Nuclear energy might last longer, but it is not renewable. The same problems would arise as with fossil fuels, which will eventually all be used up.

In our report we set out what we think could be done overall whereby each nation could treat the issue in a slightly different manner. One thing is certain – we must seek to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide emissions. There is no way out of that. Many people in many nations are saying that we do not need to bother with it, but we have to tackle the problem, whether in the short term or the long term. We can either do something to protect the environment or let things drift on – as, sadly, politicians tend to – and end up with a shortage of fossil fuels and no choice but to do something about it. The view of my committee is that we would far sooner deal with it now than later because it will become so much more difficult as we go on.

I am sometimes fairly pessimistic and take the view that when we run out of fossil fuels life on earth will be extremely difficult, if not impossible. That is how serious the matter is. We can begin by doing something about it now. Many nations are moving in the right direction, but that is not enough because some are doing nothing at all. All that the report tries to do is to have the matter debated in a more open and constructive manner and to come forward with some solutions. I therefore hope that you will support it.

We must try to make some headway soon. It is not just a matter of dealing with the Kyoto proposals and anything that goes beyond them – it is such a huge problem that it will require efforts greater than those that we are used to making in dealing with many other problems from day to day. We are not just talking about the possibility of the loss of human life on this planet but of something far worse – human values. I am well aware that those are what the Council of Europe stands for. However, human beings are not the only inhabitants of this planet – there are other creatures, as well as plants. Unless the human race does something about the situation we will face not only the possibility of eliminating the human race from the planet but eliminating all life as we know it. We have a very grave responsibility in that respect. It is not just about human beings, although they are obviously the most important consideration – we have a responsibility to act in a proper and decent manner to other life forms. That will be very difficult. I know for a fact that we will encounter tremendous resistance to our proposals from certain vested interests, but it must be met head on because we cannot afford to fail.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Etherington.

I am happy to welcome in our midst Mr Claude Mandil, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency. The IEA, which is based in Paris, is a specialised agency within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Twenty-six of the thirty OECD member countries are members of the IEA. It is the world's leading international body, which is responsible for political action in the event of energy emergencies, and for energy analysers.

Today's world energy situation is very difficult. Oil prices are abnormally high due to rapidly increasing demand throughout the world, reduced reserves, political instability and, it has to be said, insufficient energy conservation and efficiency. Mr Jean-Claude Trichet, President of the European Central Bank, recently described the high oil prices as very unwelcome for global economic growth.

Mr Mandil, I stress that we in this Assembly take a strong interest in the energy situation and prospects, accountable as we are to the national parliaments in our forty-six member states and our citizens. As you know, our Assembly also has Observers present from Mexico, which is a major oil producer, and Canada. You also know that we are a parliamentary forum of the OECD and hence, in a way, the IEA. We are happy about our excellent co-operation with your agency in the lead-up to today's debate. We know of your extremely rich experience and qualifications in the field of energy, which you have used on behalf of both your country, France, and internationally. We greatly look forward to listening to your presentation. You have the floor.

Mr MANDIL (*Executive Director of the International Energy Agency*) thanked the President for his welcome and said how pleased he was to have been invited to address the Assembly. The President had described the work of the agency. The motto of the agency was, in English, "Energy, Environment and Efficiency" It was essential to discuss energy in its global context.

Each year in the autumn the agency published its forecast for several years ahead. It had recently produced a statement about the situation in 2030; this was referred to as the "reference scenario". The agency had looked at the future position if there was no change in governments' energy policies. It estimated that by 2030 the world would be using 60% more energy. The use of nuclear energy would have decreased and gas consumption would have increased. Oil would be the main energy source. This was clearly not sustainable. There would be a depletion of fossil fuels and the world would become increasingly dependent on fewer and fewer areas of production. Europe would rely even more on Russian reserves. The security of Russian supplies was paramount. Investment was needed in oil, gas and electricity and private as well as public money should be made available. Things were moving in the right direction in Russia, but there were some concerns as far as gas supply was concerned. This was a public monopoly in Russia with no access for third parties to its transport system. Europe must work with Russia to liberalise its gas market.

Climate change meant that by 2030 CO₂ emissions would rise by 65%; this was very far from the Kyoto Protocol. Today 25% of the world's population had no access to electricity or modern forms of energy and this could not be allowed to continue. He had therefore shown how the agency's reference scenario was unsustainable and he would attempt to describe an alternative way forward. This would have to be based on existing technologies. First of all there would have to be much greater energy efficiency, making more use of renewables and in some countries nuclear power. The alternative scenario could work and by 2030 demand for energy could be down by 10%. We could all make energy savings and reduce our consumption which would benefit both ourselves and the world at large. This could be done immediately and he urged governments to relaunch their energy efficiency policies.

However, energy efficiency would be insufficient in the long term and it was also necessary to reduce CO₂ emissions drastically. Using, for example, just wind energy or nuclear power would mean increasing the output in those two areas by impossible amounts. It was therefore a question of making use of a variety of strategies; reducing the amount of energy used, relying more on renewables, investment and in some areas increasing the use of nuclear energy. There was a need for further research and development in this area.

Secondly, Europe must react to the energy situation immediately. Thirdly, he stressed that there was no miracle solution to the problems, and, fourthly, more research was needed alongside more international co-operation.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you, Mr Mandil, for your important contribution. I call Sir Sydney Chapman, who will speak on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Sir Sydney CHAPMAN (*United Kingdom*). – May I join you, Mr President, in welcoming our two distinguished guests to this very important discussion? We are debating two reports, which I judge to be informative, thoughtful and, in particular, extremely balanced. I congratulate Mr Berceanu, Mr Etherington and their respective secretariats on their considerable contribution.

We are discussing increasing energy needs at a time of a deteriorating world environment. Energy consumption is growing in an age of economic development and increasing population, so the problem is going to get worse and we must concentrate on energy efficiency.

More than half of the power generated in Europe comes from fossil fuels such as coal, oil and gas. More than one third of it is generated by nuclear power, while less than one eighth comes from hydro power. However, the proportions vary widely across different European countries. For example, nearly 80% of French energy is generated by nuclear power, whereas the figure in the United Kingdom is just more than 20%. Austria produces 70% of its energy from renewable sources, and Sweden produces nearly 60%, but in Germany and the UK the proportion is less than 10%. As a general observation, renewable energy proportions tend to be higher in European countries with smaller populations.

It is self-evident that fossil fuels cause air pollution, and it is a near certainty that increasing air pollution has led to global warming and climate change. Renewable sources of energy – solar, wind, tidal, geothermal and biomass, as well as hydro power – promote sustainable development in the most effective way.

In my small and quick contribution to this debate, Mr President, I shall make three points. First, I believe that fossil fuels come from a finite source, and that many fossil fuels are being rapidly depleted. Europe is particularly dependent on imports, and there could be an insecurity of adequate supply given the nature of the world in which we live. Furthermore, fossil fuels bring about harmful pollutants.

Secondly, renewable energy is and will continue to be a relatively small provider and proportion of our total energy needs. In the United Kingdom, we are aiming for 10% of our electricity coming from renewables by 2010. Sad to say, I think we are behind schedule with respect to meeting the target; I shall be agreeably surprised if we meet it in five years' time. Currently, the figure is 4%.

Also, not all renewables are necessarily pollution free. They are, however, pollution free in one sense. On wind power, for example, it is no use providing a beautiful sustainable energy source if we are going to ruin the beauty of our country landscapes. That point must be made.

Finally, I believe that a little bit of everything, as has been eloquently said, is the way ahead. There is a need for nuclear power. There is also a need for a number of countries to take urgent decisions as to whether to have a new generation of nuclear power. I think it has a part to play.

On behalf of the European Democratic Group, I welcome these reports and wish the rapporteurs well.

(Mr Mercan, Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair in place of Mr van der Linden.)

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you. I call Mr Rakhansky to speak on behalf of the Group of the Unified European Left.

Mr RAKHANSKY (*Ukraine*) said that the Assembly must pay attention to the development of energy resources. To protect the environment the world had moved towards nuclear power, but spent nuclear fuel was still proving a problem. He said that his party, the UEL, supported the draft resolution but felt that this problem must be solved. Therefore his party could not support the development of an international thermo-nuclear reactor. He asked what lessons had been learnt from the Chernobyl disaster which had happened nineteen years ago to the day. Because of the disaster 8 million people had been exposed to unacceptable levels of radioactivity; 6 000 of these had died and must be remembered today. The question of Chernobyl must be raised today, as tomorrow might be too late. Fresh problems might arise if current problems concerning the Chernobyl site were not addressed. He proposed that the Assembly should ask the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs to report on Chernobyl in preparation for a debate he proposed to be held in 2006.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you. I call Mr Shybko to speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Mr SHYBKO (*Ukraine*). – Dear colleagues, I thank our rapporteurs for their important work, and their conclusions and recommendations, which deserve our attention. They should be supported, and our group supports them.

The importance of this topic could be expressed in these words: no energy, no life. However, without environmental protection there will be no life either. The attention of the rapporteurs is directed mainly to the analysis of that problem within European Union member states, which is understandable as the problem is more accentuated in those countries. EU member states consume more and more energy. Hence, they import more and more energy products.

However, there is still a shortage of electrical energy. One reason for that is that the price for oil products has tripled since 1999. If that continues, within the next twenty to thirty years the needs of 70% of EU countries will not be met.

In that connection, I want to say that one relevant issue with regard to resolving the problem could be identified if we considered a complex approach within the framework of all European countries, Council of Europe countries and joint efforts of all European countries.

I shall take Russia as an example. By the way, there are only some common words about Russia in the report. I support Mr Mandil on having more co-operation with Russia. That country satisfies 40% of the EU's natural gas needs, but the question is how to use it in a rational way for the whole of Europe. We must also take into account Russia's policy with regard to its prospecting and extraction. Do we know something about that?

Today, Ukraine's nuclear power stations have as many as fifteen blocks, but nuclear energy is more and more considered a non-prospective option. In Europe, plans exist to decommission them, but what will be substituted for them? Are there examples of such massive decommissioning? There are no such examples.

In that respect, would it not be a good idea to try to take into account the experience that we have obtained following the Chornobyl disaster? Today is the anniversary of what tragically happened there in 1986.

The issues that we are considering today – even if resolutions are adopted – should remain under the constant attention of the Council of Europe. We must return to them again and again, as they will not leave us that easily. Thank you for your attention.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Shybo. I call Mr Gubert on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party.

Mr GUBERT (*Italy*) thanked both committees for submitting distinguished reports which stressed clean energy. The Kyoto Protocol had entered into force and Europe had to increase its speed of action. There had to be more investment in research and development and energy saving. The cost of transport had to be looked at. Low energy costs were not justified and there was still energy waste. The free market was lauded, but efforts to conserve resources was often not supported. He referred to paragraph 12 of the resolution. It was not good enough to say that a nuclear plant was near a neighbouring country's border. Countries had to shoulder their own responsibilities. He was interested in the growth of countries which were seeking to catch up with the developed world. The high cost of oil and gas was due to tax not extraction. On behalf of the EPP/CD he welcomed the reports.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Gubert. I call Mr Dupraz, on behalf of the Liberal, Democratic and Reformers' Group.

Mr DUPRAZ (*Switzerland*) said that the two reports were complementary. Economic development and higher living standards increased the consumption of energy. This was good because it indicated prosperity, but worrying because of fossil fuel scarcity. There was no reason to panic, but a targeted response was required. Whilst consumption conservation was required, this was not enough. Alternative sources of energy, for example, solar, biomass, green fuels and wind must be explored. The increased demand for oil made renewable energy alternatives more attractive. The programmes for these options must be reinforced in order to take advantage of their cleanliness, non-polluting character and local sourcing. Such activity respected the Kyoto Treaty. These were complementary approaches. He congratulated the committees and accept both reports.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Dupraz. I call Mr Preda.

Mr PREDÁ (*Romania*) congratulated Mr Berceanu and his team on a detailed and coherent report. Energy was a very sensitive subject with consumption up, and resources down. It was vital that Europe sought a stable approach which would protect the environment. European countries had to realise the present risk to supply, although Europe had limited influence and the key was global resources. The management of energy was the priority, but tax harmonisation and dissemination of new technology were important. Reinforcing co-operation in energy with countries of the Caspian area and Russia was important. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe was an excellent forum for examining the challenges in this area and stimulating wider political debate. Europe had to guarantee stable resources and the European charter on energy and its protocols were a framework. It was necessary to focus on energy savings, and look at the context of the enlargement of Europe. There had to be a joint European vision on energy policy. Mr Berceanu's report described all the issues very accurately.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Preda. I call Mr Kucheida.

Mr KUCHEIDA (*France*) welcomed the recognition of the influence of coal over the last 200 years in the report of Mr Etherington's committee, but like him appreciated the problems of fossil fuel for the environment. The World Health Organisation indicated that several thousand people die because of air pollution; European life expectancy had diminished by eight months because of such pollution, and children were more vulnerable to bronchitis and asthma. Since 1973 consumption had increased by 25%, one in two journeys by car were less than three kilometres and the reserves of oil, gas and coal were constrained. If global warming was not to increase, Kyoto must be respected. The energy consumption of the United States was twice that of Europe and it must ratify the Kyoto Treaty. There had to be co-operation with developing countries in order that they could learn from Europe's experience. China was the second largest importer of oil. The costs of motor transport had to be taken into account to arrive at an accurate cost of goods. New technologies had to be pursued, for example, non-polluting vehicles. Environmentally advantageous policies should not be allowed to be blocked by vested interests such as oil companies. The priority would be to make energy savings. Lifestyles and consumption patterns had to be reconsidered. There was a need to live more simply, so that others could simply live.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Kucheida, but you took too much time. I call Mr Meyer.

Mr MEYER (*France*) emphasised that in France 78% of the energy used was nuclear. There were no greenhouse gases produced by this method. It was important to note that France exported electricity and this was only possible because of its reliance on nuclear energy. The management of nuclear waste was of course an important consideration. In March 2005, the French parliament had produced a report on the management of radioactive waste and would need to decide what to do by 2006. Some 6% of primary energy in France was based on renewables such as hydro-electricity and wind power. Wind power was much less developed in France than in other countries and there were problems with its storage. The French Parliament was currently considering a draft law on energy and another document on the aquatic environment. France was keen to conserve more energy, but it did not want to reduce its use of nuclear energy.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Meyer. I call Ms Anttila.

Ms ANTTILA (*Finland*). – I congratulate both rapporteurs on their excellent reports. Mr Etherington's report describes very well the increasing problems of global warming and climate change that are facing us. It is a very realistic description of all the threats and possibilities, as well as the many responsibilities that we have as member states and decision makers.

Renewable sources of energy – biomass, geothermal, hydro power, solar power, wind and so on – can solve the sustainability problem and in the long run may offer a viable alternative to conventional energy production systems. What must we do to achieve the targets on renewable energy? It requires more research in this field and the development of new technology to utilise renewable energy. It requires wide commitments by governments to develop energy taxes to make renewable energy competitive among other energy possibilities. The solution is increasingly dependent on governments' attitudes and commitments; we politicians can do much more.

The report mentions the Kyoto Protocol targets. I congratulate the Russian Government on its very important and responsible decision to accept and ratify the Kyoto Protocol. The Kyoto Protocol will not function with so many free travellers such as the United States of America, China and the others. I hope that the USA and the other big countries that have not yet ratified the Kyoto Protocol will do so in the near future, because we have common responsibilities on global warming and environmental problems. Thank you for your attention.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Ms Anttila. I call Mr Grignon.

Mr GRIGNON (*France*) congratulated the rapporteur. The committee was right to say that energy policy was a Europe-wide subject. At the recent G7 in Washington equal emphasis had been placed on the supply of oil and energy saving. The Assembly was correct to concentrate on energy saving. There was a need for much greater effort to save energy by improving the design of buildings and providing more insulation. Just as eco- labels were commonly found on household appliances so the energy consumption levels of buildings should be publicised. The main alternatives were wind and bio-energy. The use of electric vehicles especially in public transport was also important. Nuclear power accounted for only 2% of the energy used in Europe. France was keen to ensure that its nuclear power plants were secure and also to tackle the problem of waste management. Further research was needed. The rapporteur was correct in his conclusions and should be congratulated.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Grignon. I call Mr Avdić.

Mr AVDIĆ (*Bosnia and Herzegovina*). – First, I would like to congratulate both rapporteurs on the exceptionally prepared and scientifically based documents. I stress the importance of the draft resolution, which provides for future steps in the development of the energy sector in a pan-European political framework.

We are united in our belief that the political, economic and social interests of each member state of the Council of Europe are served by establishing a self-sustaining energy future for coming generations. We are aware of our responsibility and know that we have only borrowed the planet earth from our children and future generations. Therefore, dialogue in developing energy policy and respect for the Kyoto Protocol is more than necessary.

Let us consider the prognosis. A Union of the Electricity Industry diagram shows a trend of decreasing exploitation and use of natural energy resources such as natural gas, coal and nuclear energy, with hydro energy remaining at its current level.

Those decreases apply to the European Union. The situation in central and eastern Europe is significantly different. In that region, the impact of electrical energy from the thermo-power plants on coal and hydro energy, and the impact of gas and alternative energy sources, is greater. Technologies for obtaining and exploiting, for example, coal, are still at a low level and the price of coal is unacceptable. All those problems in the energy sector become common ground for countries that suffer from a shortage and a surplus in production.

It is imperative to create a common policy for the production and use of energy, paying special attention to ecologically sustainable development and to the fact that only four EU countries have incorporated the Kyoto Protocol into their legislation.

All those points place an obligation on us. Apart from the tasks for member countries of the Council of Europe as defined in the resolution, we should also re-examine the possibility of common research into developing new technologies for exploiting fossil fuels. We should do that while taking special account of the Kyoto Protocol and alternative energy sources, as stipulated by the resolution. We should consider joint research on thermo-nuclear fusion and we should allocate the necessary financial resources for building the International Thermo-nuclear Experimental Reactor – ITER – project.

That project would significantly help developing countries and those that are in transition to innovate their own technologies, increase safety and economic efficiency and restore their energy systems.

Thank you for your attention.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Avdić. I call Mr Özal.

Mr ÖZAL (*Turkey*). – First, I would like to thank the rapporteur and the secretariat for their invaluable work.

If there is one thing that the world is going to need more of in the coming years, it is energy. I therefore consider the interest of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in the rising challenge of Europe's energy vulnerability timely. Europe's future depends on a secure, affordable and ecologically sustainable energy supply. A constant energy flow has always been the precondition of a successful economy.

It is not a simple economic matter, which we can easily ignore and leave to the economists or the engineers. The problem of increasing energy consumption is so important that it requires a delicate touch in political, environmental, social and technical fields.

Today, global energy consumption still depends on the oil supply. The price of oil has long been a determinant of economic performance, with high oil prices associated with grave social and economic problems such as high inflation and high unemployment. That has drastic consequences in some Third World countries. It also undermines Europe's economic competitiveness. Governments and other international actors should develop instruments such as renewable and non-emitting energy technologies, which reduce energy demand and dependence on imported fuel.

In that context, I fully support the draft resolution, which can be considered as a sort of guideline to this end. The measures, if applied by member states and especially the European Union, will contribute to removing the connection between economic growth and energy consumption, improving diversification of energy sources and thus improving energy security in the long term.

Before concluding, I should like to mention another crucial aspect of our energy problems – energy security. We all know the importance of energy security, and I shall therefore confine myself to the actual threats.

There are two fundamental threats to energy security. The first is the risk to the climate caused by the world's increasing consumption of hydrocarbons. The evidence of the link between energy use and climate change is now sufficient to justify precautionary action.

In that matter, the EU is in a position of leadership. It has said that it will apply the Kyoto Protocol and it has adopted internal emissions targets. Its new system for trading emission rights will have an impact beyond Europe, through demonstrating that climate change can be addressed without threatening competitiveness and prosperity. In that context, I confirm that Turkey has not signed the Kyoto Protocol but I believe that, in the near future and through negotiations with the EU, we, too, will apply the protocol.

The other risk to energy security is that available supply will not match growing demand. As we all know, the demand for energy is driven by demography and economic performance. The world's population – more than 6 billion today – is growing by almost 10 000 an hour. By 2015, there will be 7.2 billion people on the planet, according to United Nations predictions.

I congratulate the rapporteur and the Assembly on their attention to this global threat, which will greatly influence our children's lives.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Özal.

I call Mr Steenblock.

Mr STEENBLOCK (*Germany*) said that climate change was the greatest problem facing the world at present and a herculean task to tackle. There were two sides to the problem; energy efficiency and the raw materials used to create energy. Importantly, Europe should focus on producing a more efficient infrastructure. State subsidy programmes and fiscal market measures were needed. As regards transport, less fossil fuels should be used and there should be a move towards using bio-fuels, hydrogen and hybrid engines. No one source of renewable energy would meet all needs. All options must be considered and all options had their various pros and cons. The future should focus on using various sources of energy simultaneously to meet fuel requirements. Renewable sources of energy would also create more employment which was to be welcomed. Europe should invest in research today to tackle the problems of tomorrow. A small contradiction in the report was noted – nuclear energy, because of problems with security and storage, should not have a future in Europe. The billions of euros spent on research in this area had been wasted. Europe would do better to invest in renewable sources. How energy concerns were dealt with today would determine the state of the planet left to our children.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Steenblock. I call Mr Huseynov.

Mr Rafael HUSEYNOV (*Azerbaijan*). – All of life is connected to energy, because life itself means energy. If a human being runs out of energy, life for him or her comes to an end. In order to continue with our lives, to maintain energy supplies and to live in peace, we must use different energy sources.

The energy sources and systems that we use provide us with comfort and well-being, but if we fail to use them correctly, they may be a source of danger. Europeans, and particularly those who live in the post-Soviet area, remember the Chornobyl tragedy – the word "Chornobyl" means "black event" in Russian. We must do our utmost to ensure that another "black event" does not occur, but the Council of Europe would consent to the next "black event" if it were to fail to take decisive steps in that regard.

The Metsamor nuclear power station in Armenia is one of the energy sources that promises such terrible tragedies for not only the South Caucasus, but the entirety of Europe and the Middle East. In recent years, several serious accidents have occurred in that nuclear power station, which is obsolete.

It is not enough to say that outdated Soviet technology works, because the power station is located in an extremely delicate seismoactive zone. The Spitak earthquake took away thousands of people's lives, and we remember the terrible damage that it caused in Armenia. In recent years, earthquakes in the geographical zone where the Metsamor nuclear power station is located have intensified, and it is probable that stronger earthquakes will occur.

The European Union has appealed to Armenia to close down that nuclear power station, which is a source of danger rather than energy, but that appeal has had no result, and Armenia continues to ignore similar appeals from neighbouring states. The Council of Europe has repeatedly raised the issue of

Metsamor, but, although several documents detailing the danger have been produced, Armenia is still a long way away from closing it down.

The state of Armenia, whose first task is to ensure the security of its citizens, is not willing even to listen to the alarm calls of its citizens and of the Green movement in the country regarding the closedown of Metsamor.

During recent years, although there have been accidents that led to the stoppage of the reactors for a while, they have not yet resulted in a huge destruction that could be called a second Chornobyl – a second black event. However, if we approach this issue without emotion and with a cool mind, we must confess that that dreadful probability represents an inevitable perspective.

Meanwhile, by burying the radioactive wastes from Metsamor nuclear power station in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan-Karabakh and seven surrounding districts surrounding Karabakh, and by dumping these wastes into the rivers running into those territories, Armenia has created conditions for ecological calamities whose serious consequences would not be eliminated for tens of years.

One meaning of "Karabakh" is "black garden". The gardens of Karabakh have been put into darkness by Armenians.

Another meaning of "Karabakh" is "black knot". Armenia, with its policy of occupation and the massive damage inflicted purposefully on ecology, has created the Karabakh tragedy – the "black knot" in the South Caucasus, which is difficult to untie. If the Metsamor nuclear power station is not closed down in the shortest possible time, Armenia will cause a second Chornobyl – the black event that will be dangerous for the lives of us all.

I call on the Council of Europe – all of you – to stop uncontrolled, ungovernable Armenia and to achieve the closing down of Metsamor for the sake of the future of Europe. Thank you for your attention.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you. I call Mr Falzon.

Mr FALZON (*Malta*). – In today's world, everybody is aware of the effects that in some way or other have impacts on our environment. Everybody speaks about environmentally sustainable development while bearing in mind the great challenge of aiming for a better quality of life. We succeed in achieving a better quality of life only if we find the optimum balance between economically and environmentally driven factors.

Business communities in various countries often argue that regulations directed towards the environment are a major cost consideration that cannot be supported from the financial point of view. That may be the case today, but the current global context of pressure on resources and rising energy prices is proving the opposite.

The effects of conventional energies on the environment are well known. They generate pollution, which contributes to global warming and climate change. Besides, emissions from industries have created health hazards in various countries.

In particular, I must mention Malta, which is a small but dynamic nation and one of the most densely populated countries in the world. With a population of 400 000 inhabitants in just 265 sq. km, the island of Malta is facing difficult and contrasting issues regarding energy pollutants affecting land use. Energy issues are becoming increasingly important for my country, and that is a major challenge that the environment and planning authority in Malta is encountering at present. Environment authorities must ascertain whether we make the best use of the country's limited resources.

I refer to the excellent example in the introduction of Mr Bill Etherington's report: "by using an air conditioning system to cool down a room, we release through the radiator, outside of the building, the losses of the conversion process as heat. So, on the whole, instead of decreasing the temperature, we are actually contributing to an increase in the global temperature of the environment."

Buildings, whether domestic, industrial or commercial, should be designed energy efficient so that its users will reduce, if not eliminate, the demand for conventional energy sources. In most cases, the use of conventional energy can be substituted for other forms of energy, which contributes positively to the environment.

In various areas around the world, densely residential accommodation is located a few metres away from industrial zones. Emissions from flues in such areas are making living conditions untenable and are definitely a health hazard to residents. Small countries have even greater disadvantages due to

restricted land use, so they definitely need aid and support from the European Union. It is thus beneficial for all nations to look forward and seek technological innovations in renewable energy sources.

This Parliamentary Assembly must support the European Union's commitment to promote and ensure environmentally friendly energy choices. The advances in technology should lead to real cost-effective renewable energy solutions. National governments must take all legislative and fiscal measures needed to develop new sustainable renewable energy policies and to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, which have serious environmental consequences.

It is also important to ask ourselves fundamental questions. Why are we using excessive amounts of conventional energy, far beyond what is required? What is the price of conventional energy pollutants? What is the price of risking the environment? What is the price of increasing health hazards?

Unfortunately, we are ready to pay for rising prices in conventional energy sources, but we are not ready to contribute positively to the environment we live in. Those are inevitable questions that will be answered through the process of energy research and technological measures, fiscal measures, and educational and public information measures.

A supported change in cultural attitude together with a coherent approach in the development of such environmental initiatives will pave the way for our obligation to shape a better world for us and for coming generations.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you. I call Mr Vrettos.

Mr VRETTOS (*Greece*). – We are debating two excellent supplementary reports referring to energy vulnerability and the environment. Energy and the environment are linked – they are interdependent. The production and distribution of energy have implications and grave impacts on the environment. Fossil fuels such as oil, natural gas and coal are the main sources of Europe's energy consumption and this trend will continue to grow unless specific measures manage to reverse it.

Foreseeing the increasing energy deficit through the next decades in most European countries and assessing the requirements of the coming into force of the Kyoto Protocol, one can understand the economic and political implications of this critical dependence on fossil fuels.

Nuclear power is one of the few energy sources that emits virtually no greenhouse gases and reduces dependence on fossil fuels. On the other hand, there are serious problems with managing and stocking radioactive nuclear waste. There is also fear of the dangers of widespread radioactive contamination in the case of an accident.

Renewable energy sources – solar, wind, hydro and geothermal, as well as biomass, biofuels, hydrogen and combustible waste – are, on the whole, underutilised in Europe despite their potential in most countries. Excluding hydro power, the other energy sources cannot seriously affect the energy balance.

Energy savings and gradual replacement of the fossil fuels are at the core of our policy. More specifically, we must consider promoting and implementing in all possible areas – industry, transport, households, and so on – environmentally friendly technologies with increased energy efficiency; the introduction of alternative sources of energy such as biofuels and hydrogen-driven fuel cells for use in hybrid vehicles; securing nuclear power plants against the risks of radioactive emissions and the effective management of nuclear wastes, although we must be careful in creating new nuclear power plants in earthquake areas, such as South-Eastern Europe and the eastern Mediterranean basin, and neighbouring countries' decisions that are against nuclear power plants being close to their borders must also be respected; and research on thermonuclear fusion and the construction and operation of the international thermonuclear experimental reactor project, which will perhaps open new roads in our energy policy.

The energy sector, of all environmental disciplines, should unite all developed countries in the goal of common research programmes, the exchange of knowledge and mutual support. Pollution, however, and environmental degradation know no borders and have grave social, economic and political impacts. Europe must offer leadership in spreading clean technology and better patterns of energy consumptions beyond its borders, especially in Africa. That was what Europe promised in Johannesburg and it is a good way of justifying the role that we want to play in a world of democracy, equality and peace.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Vrettos. I call Mr Jacyna-Onyszkiewicz.

Mr JACYNA-ONYSZKIEWICZ (*Poland*). – The future of European energy is related to the development of thermonuclear systems or fusion-based nuclear power plants. At present, the main

sources of energy are systems based on fossil fuels and nuclear fission which, unfortunately, are not neutral for the environment. On the other hand, renewable sources of energy cannot provide energy in sufficient amounts. For those reasons, the only prospective source of pure energy is the thermonuclear reactor. Such reactors do not exist at present, although their construction and functioning have been the subject of study for more than fifty years. The study of thermonuclear systems has not been intense, because a strong fuel energy lobby is not interested in their speedy development.

As a physicist, I believe that intensification of work on developing thermonuclear energy systems is in the best interests of European countries. Such intensification should take place within a long-term and sufficiently subsidised international research project. Without such projects, commercial thermonuclear power stations will not be constructed before 2050. The realisation of such projects would stimulate the development of new technologies in Europe. One reason why the Lisbon strategy was not successful is that there is a lack of large-scale research programmes in Europe. In the USA, large-scale research projects, mainly connected with the military, have been the drivers of technological progress.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Jacyna-Onyszkiewicz. Mr Jonas is not here, so I call Mr Platvoet.

Mr PLATVOET (*Netherlands*). – The report on energy systems and the environment is important, because the production and consumption of energy is one of the biggest threats to sustainable development, as well as one of the biggest opportunities. There is a threat in cases where the production of energy exhausts natural resources. In the case of nuclear energy, a disaster would pose a great risk to the environment, and it is impossible to find a sustainable solution for storing waste. However, there are also opportunities if the western world takes seriously the Kyoto Protocol and the recent millennium report by the United Nations. It is absolutely necessary to develop renewable energy systems. Mr Etherington's report and the draft resolution offer many good proposals on technical, fiscal, educational and information measures to decrease the environmental impact of energy production, transport and consumption.

The use of renewable sources such as biomass and hydro power as well as solar, wind and tidal energy should be the core business of western energy policy. However, as the report shows, in many western European countries, the percentage of electricity generated from renewable sources is low. In Belgium, Germany, Greece, Ireland, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom it is less than 10%. That is disappointing, because in my own country, for instance, discussions on the need for renewable energy systems have been taking place for thirty years. There is a great deal of support for "green" energy, but political will is too soft and the power of the traditional energy producers is too strong.

The production of nuclear energy is the main issue in the report by Mr Berceanu on Europe's growing energy vulnerability. That report, produced on behalf of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, takes an approach to nuclear energy which, in my opinion, is too positive. Mr Etherington, another socialist, who has produced a report on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Agricultural and Local and Regional Affairs, takes a more critical approach to nuclear energy. It is the old struggle between the economy and the environment. The Assembly cannot adopt both reports and both resolutions, given the difference in approach to the important issue of nuclear energy. I believe that members of the Assembly who are against the use of nuclear energy should vote against Mr Berceanu's report.

Nuclear energy can, of course, stop the increase of air pollution by greenhouse gases, but the risk of a disaster, the impossibility of storing nuclear waste safely and the link with nuclear weapons are issues of much greater importance, and we must deal with them. The increase of air pollution by greenhouse gases can also be tackled by reducing the consumption of energy and by stimulating the production of energy from renewable sources. Energy saving in homes, public buildings, offices and industries is a great challenge. There is much more to do in that field. Along with stimulating production from renewable sources it will certainly lead to intelligent, new, clean technologies that benefit both the environment and sustainable economic growth.

In his contribution today, Mr Mandil praised the liberalisation of the energy market. However, he failed to tell us how such liberalisation would benefit sustainable development. In the Netherlands we have not had a positive experience following liberalisation of the electricity market, which resulted in higher prices for consumers, huge profits for enterprises, more people in management receiving high salaries, worse service for consumers and, finally, a lack of will among the privatised companies to reduce the use of electricity.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Platvoet. I call Mr Sasi.

Mr SASI (*Finland*). – We should have three aims for Europe's energy policy. First, we have to guarantee the safety of supply and take care that there is no lack of supply at any moment. That means that there must be a sustainable level of consumption, even into the future, and very good co-operation and companionship with Russia, the main supplier of energy to Europe.

Secondly, we have to keep Europe globally competitive to guarantee economic growth and higher employment. That means that the price of energy must not be too high. Thirdly, we have to protect the environment and minimise emissions, so we have to use those energy resources that are most environmentally friendly.

In my humble opinion, we are today too dependent on oil and gas. Those resources will be used up relatively soon. They might last fifty or 100 years, but judging by the speed at which we are using them, they will be finished sooner than that. I have great doubts about whether it makes any sense to burn those valuable materials. We should therefore raise taxes on oil and gas, especially on their use in electricity production, which is very inefficient. Cars are still the main users of oil, and we have to increase resources for research into a new power source for them. That is difficult, but good research work is being done and we should encourage it.

Saving energy is very important, but energy consumption is increasing all the time. That means that we have to put resources into research to make machines and equipment more effective, so that they consume as little energy as possible. The main challenge that we face is in eastern and central Europe, where we can make production machinery more energy-efficient. Energy taxes in those countries should be raised, and we should buy emission quotas from those countries, which would also be a way of providing them with financing.

Renewable resources must be better utilised, but we must admit that wind and solar energy cannot solve our problems. We cannot deny that the only real solution is nuclear power. There is no other way to fulfil the Kyoto criteria. Nuclear power has very competitive production costs. It produces no emissions – no CO₂ or gases. And production is in our own hands, which is very important for security. That is why the Council of Europe should encourage more of its member states to use nuclear power and emphasise the importance of investing in nuclear research.

Let me take my country, Finland, as an example. According to research, we are the most competitive country in Europe. One reason is that we are building a new nuclear power plant, and there is also discussion about building another one quite soon. The aim is to fulfil the Kyoto criteria and to be competitive at the same time.

It is also important that we achieve a common European energy market and that we have harmonised energy taxes. I give the Nordic energy market as an example: a common harmonised energy market means that you use water first, then nuclear, and coal as a last resort. That is the most environmentally friendly production policy, and it is thanks to the common energy market in the Nordic countries.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Sasi. I call Ms Pericleous-Papadopoulos.

Ms PERICLEOUS-PAPADOPOULOS (*Cyprus*). – For decades Europe's economic development was increasingly dependent on imported fossil fuels, but growing energy consumption, increasing oil prices and rising global competition over energy sources present significant security risks and make Europe extremely vulnerable. It is therefore important to pay special attention to Europe's increasing vulnerability and to consider the environmental impacts of alternative energy systems.

Europe's vulnerability results from the fact that fossil fuels are depleting rapidly. Moreover, Europe's dependence on a number of small, oil-rich nations in the unstable Persian gulf presents intolerable security risks because of political instability, terrorism and other factors in the region.

Europe and the world must find ways to minimise such risks. The real energy challenge is not just to reduce oil imports, but to shift to renewable energy resources. Conventional energy sources are known for their serious environmental consequences: air pollution, global warming and climate change. They are also being depleted at an alarming rate. In the not-so-distant future, global oil production will not be able to keep pace with global demand. Nuclear energy poses other problems, such as dangerous radioactive waste and a high risk of radioactive contamination, which is detrimental to human beings and farm and food products.

Evidently, what is needed is a new model of sustainable development, based on super-efficient, pollution-free technologies for transportation, industry and residential living. It is essential to develop

renewable, clean and environmentally friendly resources. Concerted action by the Council of Europe and the European Union towards that aim is essential. The EU has already undertaken a specific environmental commitment, under the Kyoto Protocol, to reduce emissions, and it has expressed avid interest in substantially increasing the use of renewable energy resources by 2010.

Member countries of the Council of Europe and the EU must find ways to improve the efficiency of their conventional energy systems and to implement sustainable energy strategies to tackle complex energy, environment and vulnerability issues. The aim must be to improve energy efficiency and minimise environmental risks. All legislative, fiscal, educational and public information measures composed by the rapporteurs are extremely helpful in that.

As environmental problems know no national barriers, the Council of Europe and the EU must focus even more on Europe-wide problems and pan-European solutions. Existing EU programmes such as "Intelligent Energy Europe" and the Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development programme are good steps in that direction. The EESD, which is part of the fifth framework programme of the EU, establishes a single, integrated platform for stimulating a pan-European approach to the closely related areas of environmental and energy research, based on the "eco-efficiency" concept. That aims to produce and use more and better services and products with the consumption of less energy and materials.

I am sure that if we work consistently according to those principles, at both national and European level, we can promote environmentally friendly energy choices, creating hope and optimism for the future. I congratulate both rapporteurs on their well-written reports, and I fully endorse their recommendations.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you. I call Ms Pirozhnikova.

Ms PIROZHNIKOVA (*Russian Federation*) said that in every economy environmentally friendly sources of energy were the key. Despite the wide liberalisation of markets, energy was different. It was fundamental to economies and could not be fully liberated. In the 1980s economies forgot this with a resultant rise in costs. It could not be predicted what would happen in the future, but it was unlikely to be good for Europe. The resources of the Caspian region were less than thought, and Europe was quickly depleting its oil resources. Nuclear energy was unlikely to develop much and had attracted criticism from green parties. Russia was the most reliable oil supplier for western Europe so long as new pipelines and means of transportation were developed.

She emphasised the importance of better building insulation. This was beginning to happen in the Russian Federation. The country would continue to be a very important source of energy for Western Europe.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Ms Pirozhnikova. I call Mr Melčák.

Mr MELČÁK (*Czech Republic*). – The European Community has been accustomed to a high level of electricity supply reliability. The European internal electricity market and other activities concerning energy trading regulation aim to reduce electricity prices for end customers and to improve the competitiveness of European production on the world market.

For many years, no significant system breakdowns appeared. The main goal of companies operating transmission systems was to maintain reliable operations in a vertically integrated structure, and the transmission system interconnection was subject to that. The transmission capacities, especially on interfaces, were used mostly as a help for instantaneous imports in case of domestic unit outages. Electricity trading was something extra, and more or less exceptional.

The higher pressure on transmission systems used for electricity trading, together with regulated access to the transmission system, creates new challenges for transmission system operators and asks for new behaviour by them. The practice of many companies aims to co-ordinate activities only on the bilateral level. As a result, significant system breakdowns have occurred during the past couple of years. Those incidents are viewed very negatively by customers and policy decision makers and throw a bad light not only on transmission system operators' activities but on the opening of the electricity market.

The essential condition for the security of transmission system operation and supply is co-ordination among transmission system operators who should find their field of responsibility. That is because a majority of the recent blackouts were caused solely by faults in the transmission system. Each deviation in the transmission system, wherever it may occur, has an influence on all interconnected systems and can lead to a large-scale breakdown, especially if there is insufficient co-ordination among transmission system operators. Although total reliability in the electricity supply may be an unrealistic goal, many improvements are possible.

The establishment of a European centre for the technical co-ordination of European transmission systems and cross-border trade would be a considerable contribution towards improving the quality and safety of the electricity supply to end customers, underlining the desire to reduce the damage caused by energy outages. Such a centre should have the competence and authority to acquire whatever data it deems necessary, to call meetings, to recommend action to be taken, to implement rules and regulations and to publish any breaches thereof, and so on.

The Czech Republic is prepared to participate in finding a solution and to make use of its considerable experience in co-ordinating the activities of large synchronous interconnected systems because of its former role in the Mir central dispatch system, which was located in Prague.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr. Melčák. I call Mr Jáuregui.

Mr JÁUREGUI (*Spain*) said that there was much common ground among the members of the Assembly. Like doctors all understood the disease but the only cure being offered was Aspirin. The following points had been made: fossil fuels could no longer be depended upon; renewables were not sufficient unless more use was made of wind and water energy; nuclear and bio-energy were important but insufficient in themselves; the problem of dealing with nuclear waste still had to be fully tackled. Europe was at a crossroads; it knew what to do but not how to do it. The solutions were there but were difficult to implement. What had come across was how powerless the Assembly was. The Council of Europe was not an international body that could enforce the necessary changes; only national governments could do this. In conclusion he made two main recommendations; firstly to change habits and reduce consumption and secondly to manage nuclear waste better. By fostering a culture of environmental protection we would be able to protect our children and their descendents.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – I thank Mr Jáuregui. I call Mr Kirilov.

Mr KIRILOV (*Bulgaria*) said that the Assembly had highlighted the difficult problems to be solved. Europe could not afford to wait.

(*Mr Gardetto, Vice-President of the Assembly, took the Chair in place of Mr Mercan.*)

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you Mr Jáuregui.

I must now interrupt the list of speakers. The speeches of members on the speakers' list who have been present during the debate but have not been able to speak may be given to the Table Office for publication in the Official Report.

I call Mr Berceanu, rapporteur, to reply.

Mr BERCEANU (*Romania*) said that the two reports were complementary and thanked all those involved.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does the Chairperson of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development, Mr Kirilov, wish to speak?

Mr KIRILOV (*Bulgaria*). – The whole debate contributed to a more realistic approach, our comprehension that there are no easy answers and, of course, to consideration of possible future developments. As some colleagues pointed out, access to energy is a human right. We must solve many issues but I would like to stick to the words of Mr Mandil, Executive Director of the International Energy Agency. He emphasised the need for more energy efficiency, greater use of renewable sources and more nuclear power – provided, of course, that it is safe. We must invest in the latter and have high standards of nuclear safety. Perhaps we should retain the existing power stations until we have found other responsible solutions.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you, Mr Kirilov. Does the Rapporteur of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs wish to speak? I call Mr Etherington.

Mr ETHERINGTON (*United Kingdom*). – I thank all the speakers, who, I believe, have made a success of the debate. I want to comment on the one item that causes controversy – nuclear power. Our committee's report clearly states that we are not against nuclear power. It states that there are problems with it and that we want research to be conducted to ascertain whether they can be solved. If the problems cannot be solved, that makes matters much more difficult for all concerned. It is obvious that nuclear power, provided the difficulties can be solved, can act in the short and medium term as a way of alleviating the problem of carbon emissions.

One colleague, Mr Platvoet, said that it was a case of two different reports. Of course there are two different reports, which place a different emphasis on our aims. One is written from an economic point of view and the other from an environmental point of view. That is to be expected. However, I do not want anyone to be under a misapprehension about where I stand with my report. It is neither pro nor anti nuclear power. It points out that nuclear power could be useful but only if specific matters, for example, the disposal of nuclear waste, are satisfactorily resolved. We ask for more research into that.

There will always be one country that uses such a debate to attack another. We are used to that – there is nothing unusual about it. That is part and parcel of politics.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you, Mr Etherington. I call Mr Schmied, the Chairperson of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs, to speak.

Mr SCHMIED (*Switzerland*) said that the two reports addressed the issues. They both dealt with the reduction in the availability of fossil fuels and the issue of nuclear safety. There must never be another Chernobyl. Practical solutions to all these problems were needed and all countries must work together to achieve them. He thanked all members on the committees.

THE PRESIDENT. – The debate is closed.

One amendment has been tabled to the draft resolution proposed by the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development in Document 10458, and two amendments have been tabled to the draft resolution proposed by the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs in Document 10486.

We come to the amendment to the draft resolution proposed by the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development in Document 10458.

I remind you that speeches on amendments are limited to one minute.

We come now to Amendment No. 1, tabled by Mr Miloš Melčák, Mr Miroslav Beneš, Ms Miroslava Němcová, Mr Márton Braun and Mr Miloš Kužvart, which is, in the draft resolution, at the end of paragraph 8, insert the following sentence:

“In order to ensure over the next decade operational stability and reliability of trans-European electricity networks, as well as to provide fail-proof and continuous electricity supplies for end-users, it is necessary to start to coordinate collection and use of operational information and data, in order to maximize efficiency of network utilization and to keep the security of supply at an appropriate level.”

I call Mr Melčák to support the amendment.

Mr MELČÁK (*Czech Republic*) wished to withdraw the amendment. THE PRESIDENT. – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr BERCEANU (*Romania*) (Translation). – I understand that Mr Melčák has withdrawn the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The amendment is therefore withdrawn.

We will now proceed to vote on the whole of the draft resolution contained in Document 10458.

The vote is open.

The draft resolution in Document 10458 is adopted.

Two amendments have been tabled to the draft resolution proposed by the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs in Document 10486.

The amendments to the draft resolution will be taken in the following order: 2, 1.

We come now to amendment No. 2, tabled by Mr Anatoliy Rakhansky, Mr Boris Oliynyk, Mr Doros Christodoulides, Mr Mats Einarsson, Mr Tiny Kox and Mr Mykhailo Hladiy, which is, in the draft resolution, after paragraph 3, insert the following paragraph:

"Of particular concern is the emergency situation at the "Shelter" facility which contains 200 tonnes of nuclear fuel that remained after the accident at block 4 of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, as well as the dangerous conditions for the storage of 1800 tonnes of waste nuclear fuel unloaded from the other three plants' blocks that are now kept inside the provisional storage located on the premises of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant."

I call Mr Rakhansky to support the amendment.

Mr RAKHANSKY (*Ukraine*) stressed the danger posed by the Chornobyl nuclear plant. Amendment No. 2 was important because it referred to the "shelter" facility which currently held 200 tonnes of nuclear fuel as well as the dangerous conditions for the storage of 1800 tonnes of waste nuclear fuel located on the premises of the Chornobyl plant. It was important that the two projects were brought to completion as soon as possible.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr SCHMIED (*Switzerland*) (Translation). – In favour.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The voting is open.

Amendment No. 2 is adopted.

We come now to Amendment No. 1, tabled by Mr Anatoliy Rakhansky, Mr Boris Oliynyk, Mr Doros Christodoulides, Mr Mats Einarsson, Mr Tiny Kox and Mr Mykhailo Hladiy, which is, in the draft resolution, after paragraph 14, insert the following paragraph:

"The Assembly calls upon the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) and the International Atomic Energy Agency to urgently review the issue of the intensification of works pertaining to the construction of the new protective shell (the "Confinement") over the damaged "Shelter" facility, as well as the most rapid putting into operation of the new Depository aimed at the safe storage of waste nuclear fuel in the vicinity of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant."

I call Mr Rakhansky to support the amendment.

Mr RAKHANSKY (*Ukraine*) said that Amendment No. 1 was related to Amendment No. 2. The amendment called upon the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Atomic Energy Agency to review the issue of the intensification of works on the "Confinement" and the "Shelter" facility as well as on the new depository aimed at the safe storage of waste nuclear fuel in the Chornobyl area.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr SCHMIED (*Switzerland*) (Translation). – The committee is in favour.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The voting is open.

Amendment No. 1 is adopted.

We will now proceed to vote on the whole of the draft resolution contained in Document 10486, as amended.

The voting is open.

The draft resolution in Document 10486, as amended, is adopted.

4. Iran's nuclear programme

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The next item of business this afternoon is the debate on the report, "Iran's nuclear programme: need for international response", presented by Mr Ateş on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee, Document 10496.

The list of speakers closed at 4 p.m. yesterday. Fifteen names are on the list and seven amendments have been tabled.

I remind members that we have already agreed that, in order to finish by 7.15 p.m., we shall interrupt the list of speakers at about 6.55 p.m. to allow time for the reply and the votes.

I call Mr Ateş, rapporteur. You have eight minutes.

Mr ATEŞ (Turkey). – As you have just mentioned, Mr President, the title of the report is "Iran's nuclear programme: need for international response". As you all know, Iran's nuclear programme has been on top of the international agenda and on the front pages of major international media for a while. What we have recently learned from all this information is that, for almost twenty years, Iran – without informing the International Energy Agency – was developing a secret nuclear programme, including uranium enrichment.

In doing so, Iran has failed in its commitments under the non-proliferation treaty and has created suspicion that its nuclear programme has a military purpose. Iran has claimed, and continues to do so, that its nuclear programme, including uranium enrichment, is exclusively designed for peaceful purposes in accordance with paragraph 1 of article IV of the non-proliferation treaty.

Even if that is true, according to the agreement a member country has the right to develop and research the production and use of nuclear power for peaceful purposes only under inspection by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Therefore, in this respect, Iran has failed in its commitments because it did not declare the work and the enrichment programme. It took a long, long time.

There is a large international consensus that Iran should be prevented from becoming a new nuclear weapons state. There is also overwhelming agreement between the members of the international community that if Iran becomes a nuclear weapon state that would not only change the balance of power in the sensitive area of the Middle East but have far-reaching repercussions for international stability as a whole.

In the report, I rely mainly on the IAEA position on Iran and on the basis of its documents and my visit to the agency headquarters in Vienna. Those are the major sources on which the report is based.

The main messages that I suggest in the report are that a nuclear-armed Iran is unacceptable, a negotiated solution is a better option than a military one and all Council of Europe member states should do their best to create a better chance of finding a political solution to the Iranian nuclear problem.

The European three – E3 – and Iran have continued the talks, but so far have made no substantial progress. The latest round of talks was held on 23 March and the parties agreed to continue negotiations. On 29 April, there will be another, high-level meeting in London. We do not know what the result will be; we will have to wait and see.

Under those circumstances, it is all the more important that all our countries should join their efforts in support of the E3 and make use of any influence they might have to convince Iran to accept the deal. Of course, the deal must be fair and satisfactory to all parties. After the visit of President Bush to Europe, the American Administration announced that it had decided to give US backing to the diplomatic efforts of the E3.

As a sign of a start being made, President Bush announced that the US would drop its opposition to the opening of Iran's World Trade Organisation accession process and allow sales of spare parts for Iranian civil aircraft.

That is a welcome development that is in line with the spirit of negotiation being followed by the E3, but it is only a beginning. That is why I urge all Council of Europe member and observer states – let us not forget that the Americans are observers with our Organisation – to enhance the diplomatic efforts of the E3.

We should convince the Iranians that they do not lose if they accept the deal. On the contrary, everybody may be a winner. However, the scope of the talks should be broadened to include not only nuclear matters, but the economy, technology, security and political dialogue.

Through more contacts with Iran, we might contribute to a greater opening in Iranian society and help those in the country who stand for democratic values. After all, a democratic Iran would be a threat no longer. That should be the ultimate goal of our European policies.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you. I call Mr Oliynyk, who will speak on behalf of the Group of the Unified European Left.

Mr OLIYNYK (*Ukraine*) said that it was noticeable that although no one criticised the United States, Britain or China, Iran was apparently a threat. This was a selective attitude. Iran had proved that it wished to collaborate with the International Atomic Energy Agency and with the wider international community. He expressed a wish that Iran should not follow the example of the Ukraine. Iran, however, must promise not to produce nuclear weapons. He suggested that the question of the supposed threat from Iran might disguise a threat to Iran.

Those who wanted to enter into dispute with Iran wanted to attack her. It was necessary to avoid slaughter in Iran and put an end to nuclear weapons.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you Mr Oliynyk. I call Ms Durrieu, who will speak on behalf of the Socialist Group.

Ms DURRIEU (*France*) thanked and congratulated the authors of the report. Iran's possession of nuclear grade weapons material would breach international treaties. The International Atomic Energy Agency had launched negotiations, but it needed to move on. Germany, France and the United Kingdom were trying to prevent the matter from coming before the Security Council, which would give the United States an excuse to act militarily. There were real threats of Israeli "surgical strikes". Iran wanted a nuclear bomb for two reasons: first, to protect itself and secondly, to be a focus of security in the area. The Arab states were worried about this development, but were proud because Iran's would be the 'Islamic bomb'. It was necessary to distinguish between civil and military uses; strong negotiation with Iran was necessary and appropriate pressure should be placed on Iran. She supported de-nuclearisation of the area.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Ms Durrieu. I call Mr Mercan, who will speak on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party.

Mr MERCAN (*Turkey*). – First, I thank the rapporteur, Mr Ateş, for his excellent report, which gives a fair and objective picture of Iran's nuclear activities and the position of various actors in the international community. I welcome the interest shown by the Assembly in the issue, which is extremely important at a time when the international community has offered active resistance and opposition to this very threat. Indeed, the inspection and verification activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency make it clear that Iran has not only breached her obligations following the nuclear non-proliferation treaty but the IAEA's nuclear safeguards agreement by failing to inform the agency of many aspects of her nuclear programme over the past twenty years. The agency made it known that Iran has acquired the know-how for the full nuclear fuel cycle. The agency is far from making a judgment about the real scope and purpose of Iran's programme.

Nuclear power is a threat to humanity. Any activity geared towards acquiring nuclear weapons capability is extremely detrimental to security, but it is particularly detrimental to peace and stability in the region to which the country that wishes to acquire a nuclear weapons capability belongs. We have seen the destructiveness of that threat and its consequences for human beings in Chernobyl, not to mention the devastating results for humanity of Hiroshima in the Second World War.

All those things reveal the urgency and importance of the issue, especially for neighbouring countries. It is for neighbouring countries first and foremost to ensure that they speak with one voice against the nuclear threat if we are to counter it in a resolute manner. If there is one thing that the report brings to our attention, it is the fact that Iran has failed to abide by its international obligations.

The international community should act together, and speak with one voice, against that threat, and it should use all its means to keep Iran fully engaged with the International Atomic Energy Agency. That is how we can best handle the matter.

We should also ensure that Iran's nuclear programme is oriented exclusively towards peaceful purposes. It is also important to pursue a dialogue with Iran that will ensure that its views are heard. If

Iran's activity geared towards acquiring a nuclear weapons capability is dangerous and detrimental to world peace and security, it would be equally dangerous and detrimental for the international community to fail to take a firm stance against that threat. We should therefore ensure that Iran honours its responsibilities under the non-proliferation treaty and the IAEA's nuclear safeguards agreement. Iran should be encouraged to ratify the agency's additional protocol on the application of safeguards with a view to ensuring full transparency in its nuclear activities.

I support the consolidation of the IAEA's political authority and the strengthening of its verification mechanisms, as proposed in paragraph 82 of the report. That would enhance the chances of securing better implementation of the non-proliferation treaty.

On behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, I thank the rapporteur for his valuable and important work and give our support to the report and the draft resolution.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you, Mr Mercan. I call Mr Mollazade, who will speak on behalf of the Liberal, Democratic and Reformers' Group.

Mr MOLLAZADE (*Azerbaijan*). – There are serious suspicions that Iran's atomic energy programme has a military purpose. We think that nuclear weapons in the hands of a non-democratic country will create a serious threat not only to the Middle East, the Persian gulf and the South Caucasus but to the whole world. There must be co-operation in the democratic world.

When the Liberal, Democratic and Reformers' Group discussed the situation, most members expressed the view that members of the Council of Europe should fully co-operate with the United States of America to prevent a nuclear weapons programme in Iran. I hope that all member countries will pay attention to that threat. Secretly working on a nuclear programme without giving information to the International Atomic Energy Agency creates suspicion about why Iran, a country with huge energy resources – oil and gas – has spent over twenty years working on this nuclear programme. Inspections by the IAEA should happen without delay, with the assistance of the international community – the USA and European Union countries.

I want to draw the Assembly's attention to another aspect of the problem. In our region, Armenia has the Metsamor power station, which is now under the control of the European Union. The EU has spent millions of dollars trying to stop that programme because the power station is of the Chernobyl type and is based in a region that is very seismically active. We all know that Iran recently had an earthquake that measured over 6 on the Richter scale. Situating a nuclear power station in such a region presents the risk of something dramatic happening: any pollution would cover a huge zone, including south-eastern Europe. That is why we have to pay close attention to the serious environmental aspects of the matter.

Another problem is that information from various Russian sources suggests that Russia is trying to deliver nuclear materials to Iran by special cargo plane. I recently saw on Russian television a programme dedicated to that subject. The plane's route takes in the South Caucasus, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan, and if something should happen to it, a nuclear A-bomb would destroy the region. This is the new part of Europe and I hope that Russia, as a member of the Council of Europe, will fully co-operate with us and stop providing that assistance, even if Iran's nuclear programme is a peaceful one. The environment of the Caucasus is part of Russia's environment, and we need co-operation on this issue with our Russian colleagues. Russia should stop assisting Iran in its nuclear programme.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). - Thank you, Mr Mollazade. I call Mr Atkinson on behalf of the European Democratic Group.

Mr ATKINSON (*United Kingdom*). – The European Democratic Group fully supports to the report of Mr Ateş.

We have two concerns. First, if indeed Iran is obtaining the technological capability to develop nuclear weapons, this would affect dramatically the balance of power in the most sensitive region in the world, the greater Middle East. Secondly, Iran is no democracy. Thus, the temptation to use such weapons, or even to threaten their use, without democratic accountability, is a situation that none of us can ignore, particularly as Iran is developing missiles that would bring member states, such as Turkey, within its range.

Of course Iran is just as entitled to develop a peaceful civilian nuclear energy programme as the rest of us. Unfortunately, the international community cannot trust Iran when it says that it is only a peaceful civilian programme. As Mr Ateş reminds us, Iran has been developing a nuclear programme for almost twenty years in secret without notifying the International Atomic Energy Agency. Iran has yet to

ratify the additional protocol of the nuclear non-proliferation treaty. Thus, we are suspicious that its programme has a military purpose and we can well understand that Iran should wish to develop a nuclear deterrent: it does not forget its costly eight-year war with Saddam Hussein and it does not cease to repeat that Israel has no right to exist.

We therefore fully support what the rapporteur recommends, but we say that his recommendations should go further, hence the several amendments in my name for which we seek the Assembly's support. We say that the Council of Europe, having encouraged and inspired democracy and human rights throughout our continent, should do more to encourage and inspire the same in others. This report on Iran provides us with the opportunity to encourage democracy and human rights for the people of Iran.

That is why, as we propose, we should be reminded of the work of the United Nations special rapporteur on the right of freedom of expression and opinion on the situation in Iran. We should be reminded of the mass disqualification of candidates for election last year to the Parliament of Iran. We should be reminded of the continuing harassment, discrimination and persecution of the Bahai community in Iran. And we should be reminded that Iran is now second only to China in implementing the death penalty, with more than 150 executions last year.

When the Iranian Chargé d'Affaires in London came to see me last month, he pleaded for more time for his country to become a democracy.

But the revolution that overthrew the Shah was twenty-five years ago. We have seen democracies replace dictatorships in more than twenty countries in Europe in half that time. The same has happened in Asia, in Latin America and even in Africa in less than half that time. The fact is that the ayatollahs – the unelected Council of Guardians in Iran – do not want democracy for Iran for fear that their own narrow vested interests will be swept away. Until they go, we have every right to suspect and to fear the motives of their regime, including the development of their nuclear programme. That is why we give our full support to the report before us today.

THE PRESIDENT. – Thank you, Mr Atkinson. I call Mr Cebeci.

Mr CEBECİ (*Turkey*). – I thank and congratulate the rapporteur, Mr Ateş, for a well prepared, balanced and timely report that examines a very important issue and clearly reflects the problem that has arisen from Iran's clandestine nuclear activities – a problem that has the potential to plunge the entire region into havoc. Indeed, the International Atomic Energy Agency's inspection and verification activities have made it clear that Iran has already breached obligations emanating from the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and the IAEA's nuclear safeguards agreement. Iran has failed to inform the agency about many aspects of her nuclear programme in the past twenty years. It was made known by the agency that Iran has acquired the know-how for a full nuclear fuel cycle. The agency is far from making a clear judgment on the real scope and purpose of Iran's nuclear programme, but, according to the director general of the agency, Dr El Baradei, if the intention is weaponisation, Iran is a couple of years away from a weapon. Naturally, that has caused a loss of confidence towards Iran in the international community.

As one of Iran's neighbours, Turkey fully shares the international community's concerns. If Iran's nuclear activities are geared towards acquiring a nuclear weapon capability – at this point there is nothing credible that suggests otherwise – that would be extremely threatening not only to our security but to peace and security in the entire region. Turkey supports the European Union's position on this issue. I believe that the best way to handle the problem is to keep Iran fully engaged with the IAEA and having her nuclear programme oriented exclusively towards peaceful purposes. I also attach importance to a continued dialogue in which Iran's views can be heard.

I consider the Paris accord of 14 November 2004 to be a useful step towards keeping Iran engaged. However, we note with dismay and great regret that there has been no progress in the nuclear working group. The question of whether Iran shall give up her uranium enrichment activities seems to have become the core issue that blocks progress in all other fields.

I strongly believe in the need for the Iranian authorities to fulfil their responsibilities under the non-proliferation treaty and the IAEA's nuclear safeguards agreement, and to ratify without delay the agency's additional protocol on the application of safeguards to ensure full transparency in her entire nuclear activities. I also wholeheartedly support the rapporteur's suggestion in paragraph 82 concerning the consolidation of the political authority and strengthening of the verification mechanisms of the IAEA.

I once again thank the rapporteur for his valuable and important work and give my full support to the report and the draft resolution. Thank you.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you. I call Mr Kosachev.

Mr KOSACHEV (*Russian Federation*) thought that the wording of the draft resolution was excessively hard hitting. There was a danger, as Confucius said, of the cornered cat turning into a tiger. He realised that the Assembly was not here to exchange pleasantries but if it was too harsh on Iran it might set things back. The 1992 agreement between the Russian Federation and Iran was purely an economic one. He emphasised that not just Iran but also Israel and India had signed the nuclear non-proliferation treaty.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you, Mr Kosachev. I call Mr Varvitsiotis.

Mr VARVITSIOTIS (*Greece*). – I congratulate the rapporteur on his excellent report on this crucial and urgent issue.

Iran's nuclear programme is one of the most important issues for the security of our planet. As a Greek, and therefore a citizen of a country that is very close to the area of so-called turmoil, and perhaps within range of nuclear missiles that Iran could trigger, I feel that the Council of Europe should intervene in this matter and support its resolution.

We should unanimously support the idea that Iran should be prevented from becoming a new nuclear state. The Middle East is in an unprecedented era. There is the campaign in Iraq, its still fragile outcome and the newly elected Parliament; the change in Lebanon with the withdrawal of the Syrian occupation army, and the acceleration of the rapprochement between Israel and Palestine after the death of Arafat and the withdrawal of Israelis from the Gaza Strip. All can see that the Middle East is changing rapidly. In this new era for the Middle East, we should not tolerate the belligerent action of important states such as Iran.

Iran remains one of the few countries in the world that so greatly violates the rights of its citizens. With the worst record in its treatment of human dignity and by not accepting any form of law other than Islamic law, Iran was and remains a theocratic, undemocratic state with a record of huge violation of human rights. Furthermore, it abstains from commerce, tourism and open media, all of which promote democratic freedom.

Apart from the concerns that the Iranian nuclear programme creates for stability in the region, it raises huge environmental questions. Nuclear power should be used safely so that no accidents can take place, and nuclear waste must be treated properly. Both cost a great deal of money and require much investment, and they are therefore often neglected by states that use nuclear power but do not have the economic capability. It is now some nineteen years since the terrible Chornobyl accident and we should therefore request more and more international observation of Iran's nuclear programme.

We should express our support for the European Union's E3 group – France, Germany and the United Kingdom – and their efforts under the Paris agreement. Iran must show good will through opening nuclear sites to international investigation. We should continue to express our trust in a fruitful outcome of the ongoing diplomatic efforts.

We should engage more and more with Iran to see reform take place. We should not alienate ourselves from that country for two major reasons: first, because the issue of the nuclear programme is of great importance, and secondly, because of the energy resources of Iran. Engagement and diplomacy should be our weapons to assure ourselves about the deployment of a nuclear programme and Iran's alleged involvement in terrorist attacks. A more open and democratic Iran is also in our interest.

I fully support the report and I ask you all to do the same.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you Mr Varvitsiotis. I call Mr Wilkinson.

Mr WILKINSON (*United Kingdom*). – It is hard adequately to praise the Ateş report. As others have said, it is timely, balanced, authoritative and well researched. On first reading, one might have imagined that it was better suited to the Assembly of the Western European Union, given that it deals in such a hard-hitting and effective manner with security considerations that concern not only the Middle East but all of us. However, as David Atkinson and Mr Varvitsiotis pointed out, it is the fact that Iran has such an anti-democratic regime and that its internal policies are, from a humanitarian point of view, so obnoxious that makes the report quite properly a matter for the Assembly of the Council of Europe.

Although I welcomed much in Mr Kosachev's speech, especially the fact that Russia was not prepared to see Iran become a nuclear state, I did not share his views that we should maintain a serene

atmosphere to bring about successful diplomatic engagement with Iran. The international community has, so far, stood shoulder to shoulder in condemning nuclear proliferation and has been unanimous in its criticism of Iran's secret nuclear programme. That has meant that we have made as much progress as we have and that the E3 made significant advances in their diplomacy with the Iranian mullahs. What will we do if the E3 are not successful in securing genuine verifiable non-nuclear policies on the part of the Iranians? That exercises me. The Iranians not only pursue a dual-use nuclear programme but are acquiring weapons of delivery of nuclear weapons. That alarms many experts. If we do not secure Iran's nuclear disarmament, what chance do we have of bringing about nuclear disarmament in North Korea?

Mr Kosachev understandably referred to the fact that Pakistan, India and Israel do not adhere to the NPT and that they are nuclear states. However, if we secure the verifiable nuclear disarmament of Iran, we can rightly turn to those countries and say that they must, in good faith, follow the Iranian example.

According to Mr. Ateş, Iran, as it is currently constituted, has been involved in Hizbollah, Hamas and Islamic Jihad, all of which have, to some degree, blood on their hands.

The report refers to "non-state actors" and the risk, which we must always bear in mind, that fissile material might get into the hands of terrorists. That lends great urgency to the recommendations, which Mr Ateş has introduced so responsibly.

Returning to my earlier question, I ask the Assembly to consider what we will do if diplomacy fails, in which case I think that we must return to a tight trade embargo – after all, Colonel Gaddafi was brought into the comity of more reasonable nations. If we were to ban Iran in perpetuity from the World Trade Organisation and forgo its participation in a trade and co-operation agreement with the EU, it would have an effect over time. It is certain that if we have dissenting voices and lack unity of purpose, we will not succeed in bringing about the nuclear disarmament of Iran.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you, Mr Wilkinson. I call Ms Pétursdóttir.

Ms PÉTURSDÓTTIR (*Iceland*). – The proliferation of weapons of mass destruction is, along with international terrorism, the main threat that the international community faces today. Iran has proved itself to be a defiant nation in terms of its unrelenting quest for nuclear weapons capability, and it has thereby violated its commitments under the nuclear non-proliferation treaty and its watchdog, the International Atomic Energy Agency. Further east, there is another defiant nation, North Korea, and those two states are a constant source of worry for the international community.

The days of the haves and the have-nots of the cold war are over. Recent history should teach states that the acquisition of weapons of mass destruction does nothing to further their cause. After Iraq, even Syria has recently come clean in that respect and opened up to scrutiny and inspections. I fully concur with the resolution that Mr Ateş has written on this sensitive topic, and I urge the Iranian authorities fully to comply with the demands of the international community. I also welcome the initiatives of the US and the EU3 in that respect, and, in particular, I welcome the US authorities' willingness to provide support to European diplomatic efforts.

Although we must try to give Iran the benefit of the doubt and hope that, with a concentrated effort, it will mend its ways, we cannot overlook the facts that the mullahs in Tehran have continued to define their foreign policy in opposition to the Euro-Atlantic community and that they have used confrontational methods to achieve their aims in the past. They have tried to undermine the Governments of Saudi Arabia and other states in the Middle East; they have waged a persistent terrorist campaign against the Israeli-Palestinian peace process; they have sponsored at least one direct attack against the US in Saudi Arabia in 1996; and they have tried to raise havoc in neighbouring Iraq. Moreover, we cannot overlook the fact that Iran has received extensive assistance from China, Pakistan, North Korea and other nations in the nuclear field.

The time seems to be ripe to reach an agreement with Iran. The political and economic situation in Iran is such that we are faced with not only a problem, but an opportunity. The West should use its economic power to strengthen the hand of Iranian pragmatists, who in turn could make an argument for shelving Tehran's nuclear ambitions in return for trade and investment, of which Iran is in dire need. At the same time, the international community must maintain its pressure on Iran, an example of which is the document before us this afternoon. Iran must have the choice between nuclear weapons or a vibrant economy, but it cannot have both.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – That concludes the list of speakers.

I call Mr Ateş, rapporteur and chairperson, to reply. He has four minutes.

Mr ATEŞ (*Turkey*). – I also thank all contributors for their useful ideas, opinions and comments.

This is the Council of Europe's first involvement in this particular matter, and that involvement should not end today in the Hemicycle. The work should continue, and the Council of Europe should pursue the matter and examine nuclear programmes in Iran very closely. That is my suggestion, and many members who have contributed today probably agree with it. That subject should become an important part of the Council of Europe's work.

Some speakers, including Mr Kosachev, mentioned other countries such as Pakistan, North Korea, India and Israel, which are not signatories to an NPT. The resolution contains particular paragraphs about that matter. We would like to see an NPT covering all the nations who are not currently signatories to such an agreement, and the United Nations must do something about that issue.

Council of Europe member countries must also do something. We should put some pressure on countries that are not signatories to the NPT. I agree with Mr Wilkinson that if we were to convince Iran to give up its nuclear programme, we could ask other countries to do the same thing. We should concentrate our efforts on Iran first, because Iran is a signatory to an NPT, and then we should do the same to other countries, including Israel.

That is why we could not go into detail of what can be done about democratisation in Iran or what should be the responsibilities of the existing regime along those lines. Therefore, we did not pay much attention to that particular area, although I fully agree with the comments of Mr Atkinson and Mr Wilkinson on democratisation and the human rights situation in Iran. This report, however, cannot deal with that subject.

Again, I thank all colleagues, who have contributed a great deal to the report. I wish to see in coming sessions someone else as rapporteur, who will follow this subject very closely.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you. I call Mr Toshev, vice-chairman of the committee. He has two minutes.

Mr TOSHEV (*Bulgaria*). – First, let me pay tribute to our rapporteur, who is also chairman of the committee. Because he is acting as rapporteur, I am substituting for him in the chairman's seat. I want also to express our gratitude to all those who took part in the debate today, because this is obviously an issue of great importance. The concern of the international community that Iran's nuclear programme could be used for a military purpose is very serious. Our draft resolution contains an important request to our member states to encourage the Iranian authorities to show good will and to restore the confidence of the international community by opening its nuclear programmes to international control, mainly the IAEA.

I am encouraged by the statement from Mr Kosachev that Russia is ready to co-operate in that respect, because the nuclear programme is being developed in co-operation with Russia. I think that Russia will become part of the solution to the problem, not part of the problem.

As is now widely known, Iran is part of our new neighbourhood. It is necessary to take steps to encourage the Iranian authorities and the Iranian people to apply democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms on their territory, accepting international norms in that respect. We must also keep them engaged with the non-proliferation treaty, which is of primary importance for us.

The debate should be followed up and the committee should return to the issue soon, following developments in these respects.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Thank you. The debate is closed.

The Political Affairs Committee has presented a draft resolution to which seven amendments have been tabled. They will be taken in the order in which they appear in the notice paper, as follows: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7 and 6.

I remind members that speeches on amendments are limited to one minute.

We come to Amendment No. 1, tabled by Mr David Atkinson, Mr John Wilkinson, Sir Sydney Chapman, Baroness Gloria Hooper, Mr Tigran Torosyan, Mr Zbigniew Jacnya-Onyszkiewicz, Mr Ivo Lozančić, Ms Svetlana Smirnova, Mr Xhevdet Nasufi, Mr Per Erik Monsen, Mr Tomáš Jirsa and Mr Miroslav Beneš, which is in the draft resolution, at the end of paragraph 1, add the words: “, following

evidence of the development of missiles with a range which would include Council of Europe member states.”

I call Mr Atkinson to support the amendment.

Mr ATKINSON (*United Kingdom*). – We say in the draft resolution that the Assembly is worried by reports claiming that Iran is developing nuclear technologies that might be used to produce nuclear weapons, but it is also relevant to be equally worried by the acquisition by Iran of North Korean missile technology, which would bring south-eastern Europe, including Turkey, within its range – hence the additional words that I propose.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr TOSHEV (*Bulgaria*). – The committee is in favour.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The vote is open.

Amendment No. 1 is adopted.

We come to Amendment No. 2, tabled by Mr David Atkinson, Mr John Wilkinson, Sir Sydney Chapman, Baroness Gloria Hooper, Mr Tigran Torosyan, Mr Zbigniew Jacnya-Onyszkiewicz, Mr Ivo Lozančić, Ms Svetlana Smirnova, Mr Xhevdet Nasufi, Mr Per Erik Monsen, Mr Tomáš Jirsa and Mr Miroslav Beneš, which is in the draft resolution, after paragraph 4, insert the following paragraph: “In addition, the international community and the recent report of the UN Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Expression and Opinion, Ambeyi Ligabo, continues to express concerns at the deteriorating situation for fundamental freedom and human rights in Iran, such as the mass disqualification of candidates for the Majlis (parliament) elections in February 2004, and continuing discrimination against its Bahai citizens.”

I call Mr Atkinson to support the amendment.

Mr ATKINSON (*United Kingdom*). – As several speakers in the debate have said, our suspicions of Iran’s nuclear intentions are heightened by its record on democracy and human rights, as reported by the United Nations special rapporteur and as demonstrated by the mass disqualification by the Council of Guardians of candidates to stand for its Parliament, as well as its continued persecution and intimidation of, and discrimination against, its Bahai community. It is highly relevant to point that out in this report – hence my proposed new paragraph.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

I call Mr Ateş.

Mr ATEŞ (*Turkey*). – I fully share the statement made in this amendment and, in general, the concern expressed by members that Iran is not a democracy. However, this amendment is beyond the scope of the report, which is limited to the nuclear problem. If we adopt the amendment, we will dilute the message we are sending to Iranians. Therefore, I regretfully ask the Assembly not to support the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr TOSHEV (*Bulgaria*). – The committee is against the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The vote is open.

Amendment No. 2 is rejected.

We come to Amendment No. 3, tabled by Mr David Atkinson, Mr John Wilkinson, Sir Sydney Chapman, Baroness Gloria Hooper, Mr Tigran Torosyan, Mr Zbigniew Jacnya-Onyszkiewicz, Mr Ivo Lozančić, Ms Svetlana Smirnova, Mr Xhevdet Nasufi, Mr Per Erik Monsen, Mr Tomáš Jirsa and Mr Miroslav Beneš, which is in the draft resolution, after paragraph 5, insert the following paragraph: “The Assembly also notes that Iran is now second only to China in the number of people executed, with 159 executed in 2004 including 50 publicly hanged.”

I call Mr Atkinson to support the amendment.

Mr ATKINSON (*United Kingdom*). – As you all know, one of our Organisation's principal concerns is the death penalty. Iran's appalling record of executions should be put on the record in our draft resolution – hence my amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

I call Mr Varvitsiotis.

Mr VARVITSIOTIS (*Greece*). – I am one of those who spoke for freedom and human rights in Iran and pointed out how they are not being served, but I believe that a special note about executions in Iran would not be welcome in the report. We could note that the country with the third highest number of executions in the world is the United States, but we have no doubts about its democratic beliefs and freedoms. Many of our states have not ratified the relevant provisions – they still have executions and capital punishment. The amendment would mix the message that we want to send to Iran.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr TOSHEV (*Bulgaria*). – The committee is against the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The vote is open.

Amendment No. 3 is rejected.

We come to Amendment No. 4, tabled by Mr David Atkinson, Mr John Wilkinson, Sir Sydney Chapman, Baroness Gloria Hooper, Mr Tigran Torosyan, Mr Zbigniew Jacyna-Onyszkiewicz, Mr Ivo Lozančić, Ms Svetlana Smirnova, Mr Xhevdet Nasufi, Mr Per Erik Monsen, Mr Tomáš Jirsa and Mr Miroslav Beneš, which is, in the draft resolution, after paragraph 8.iv.c, insert the following subparagraphs:

“to treat religious minorities fairly and equally and, in particular, to end all intimidation, harassment and persecution of its Bahai citizens, and persecution of people who convert from Islam to other faiths and of those who help them to do so;

to ratify the UN Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women;

to lift its reservation to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;”

I call Mr Atkinson to support the amendment.

Mr ATKINSON (*United Kingdom*). – The amendment proposes three confidence-building measures for Iran to implement that would reduce our suspicions about its nuclear intentions. I hope that on this occasion the Assembly agrees to it.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

I call Mr Ateş.

Mr ATEŞ (*Turkey*). – Our arguments against Amendments Nos. 2 and 3 hold true for Amendment No. 4, so we oppose it.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – What is the opinion of the committee ?

Mr TOSHEV (*Bulgaria*). – The committee is against the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The vote is open.

Amendment No. 4 is rejected.

We now come to Amendment No. 5, tabled by Mr David Atkinson, Mr John Wilkinson, Sir Sydney Chapman, Baroness Gloria Hooper, Mr Tigran Torosyan, Mr Zbigniew Jacyna-Onyszkiewicz, Mr Ivo Lozančić, Ms Svetlana Smirnova, Mr Xhevdet Nasufi, Mr Per Erik Monsen, Mr Tomáš Jirsa and Mr Miroslav Beneš, which is, in the draft resolution, at the end of paragraph 10.i, add the following words:

“and to the implementation of democracy and human rights;”

I call Mr Atkinson to support the amendment.

Mr ATKINSON (*United Kingdom*). – We believe that the European Union should take account of Iran's progress on democracy and human rights as well as nuclear issues when negotiating a trade and co-operation agreement – hence my amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr TOSHEV (*Bulgaria*). – The committee is in favour of the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The vote is open.

Amendment No. 5 is adopted.

We come to Amendment No. 7, tabled by MM Abdülkadir Ateş, Samad Seyidov, Latchezar Toshev, Mikhail Margelov and Azim Mollazade, which is, in the draft resolution, after paragraph 10, add the following new paragraph:

“The Assembly resolves to remain seized by the issue of the Iranian nuclear programme and instructs its Political Affairs Committee to continue to follow closely this matter.”

I call Mr Ateş to support the amendment.

Mr ATEŞ (*Turkey*). – I tabled the amendment so that CERN can continue its collaborative work on the Iranian nuclear programme. As we have heard, many of our members want that work to continue, and I am grateful to my colleagues for supporting the amendment. I urge the Assembly to do so too.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr TOSHEV (*Bulgaria*). – The committee is in favour of the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The vote is open.

Amendment No. 7 is adopted.

We come to Amendment No. 6, tabled by Mr David Atkinson, Mr John Wilkinson, Sir Sydney Chapman, Baroness Gloria Hooper, Mr Tigran Torosyan, Mr Zbigniew Jacyna-Onyszkiewicz, Mr Ivo Lozančić, Ms Svetlana Smirnova, Mr Xhevdet Nasufi, Mr Per Erik Monsen, Mr Tomáš Jirsa and Mr Miroslav Beneš, which is, in the draft resolution, paragraph 11, replace the word “and” with the following words:

“, full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and an”.

I call Mr Atkinson to support the amendment.

Mr ATKINSON (*United Kingdom*). – We believe that any proposed parliamentary dialogue with Iran should include the promotion of human rights and fundamental freedoms as well as democratic values and open society, hence the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – Does anyone wish to speak against the amendment?

That is not the case.

What is the opinion of the committee?

Mr TOSHEV (*Bulgaria*). – The committee is in favour of the amendment.

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – The vote is open.

Amendment No. 6 is adopted.

We will now proceed to vote on the whole of the draft resolution contained in Document 10496, as amended.

The vote is open.

The draft resolution in document 10496, as amended, is adopted.

5. Date, time and orders of the day of the next sitting

THE PRESIDENT (Translation). – I propose that the Assembly hold its next public sitting tomorrow at 10 a.m. with the orders of the day which were approved yesterday.

Is that agreed?

The sitting is adjourned.

(The sitting was closed at 7.05 p.m.)

CONTENTS

1. Adoption of the minutes
2. Organisation of debates
3. Energy

Presentation by Mr Berceanu of report on Europe's growing energy vulnerability, Document 10458, on behalf of the Committee on Economic Affairs and Development

Presentation by Mr Etherington of report on energy systems and the environment, Document 10486, on behalf of the Committee on the Environment, Agriculture and Local and Regional Affairs

Speech by Mr Claude Mandil, executive director of the International Energy Agency

Speakers:

Sir Sydney Chapman (United Kingdom)
Mr Rakhansky (Russian Federation)
Mr Shybko (Ukraine)
Mr Gubert (Italy)
Mr Dupraz (Switzerland)
Mr Preda (Romania)
Mr Kucheida (France)
Mr Meyer (France)
Ms Anttila (Finland)
Mr Grignon (France)
Mr Avdić (Bosnia and Herzegovina)
Mr Özal (Turkey)
Mr Steenblock (Germany)
Mr Rafel Huseynov (Azerbaijan)
Mr Falzon (Malta)
Mr Vrettos (Greece)
Mr Jacyna-Onyszkiewicz (Poland)
Mr Platvoet (Netherlands)
Mr Sasi (Finland)
Ms Pericleous-Papadopolous (Cyprus)
Ms Pirozhnikova (Russian Federation)
Mr Melčák (Czech Republic)
Mr Jáuregui (Spain)
Mr Kirilov (Bulgaria)
Mr Schmied (Switzerland)

Draft resolution contained in Document 10458 adopted.

Amendments Nos 1 and 2 to the draft resolution contained in Document 10486 adopted.

Draft resolution contained in Document 10486, as amended, adopted.

4. Iran's Nuclear Programme

Presentation by Mr Ateş of report, Document 10496, on behalf of the Political Affairs Committee

Speakers:

Mr Oliynyk (Ukraine)
Ms Durrieu (France)
Mr Mercan (Turkey)
Mr Mollazade (Azerbaijan)
Mr Atkinson (United Kingdom)
Mr Cebeci (Turkey)

Mr Kosachev (Russian Federation)
Mr Varvitsiotis (Greece)
Mr Wilkinson (United Kingdom)
Ms Pétursdóttir (Iceland)

Amendments Nos. 1 and 5 to 7 adopted.

Draft resolution contained in Document 10496, as amended, adopted.

5. Date, time and orders of the day of the next sitting