

UAE CIVIL NUCLEAR PROGRAMME

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The UAE is pursuing a peaceful, civilian nuclear energy program that upholds the highest standards of safety, security, nonproliferation and operational transparency.

The development of a peaceful, civilian nuclear energy program was based on an in-depth evaluation of the UAE's future energy needs.

In developing its nuclear energy policy, the UAE government made its peaceful objectives very clear. A policy document released in April 2008 outlined a series of commitments, including the decision to forgo domestic enrichment and reprocessing of nuclear fuel, the two parts of the nuclear fuel cycle that can most readily be used for non-peaceful purposes. Other commitments included operational transparency, non-proliferation, safety and security, partnership with other governments, seeking assistance of expert organizations, and long term sustainability.

Consequently the UAE Nuclear Law was signed in October 2009. Under this new law the federal regulatory body FANR was created.

The key entities formed to implement the UAE's nuclear energy program are:

- Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation (FANR). An independent federal agency responsible for regulation and licensing of all nuclear energy activities in the UAE with public safety as its primary objective.
- Emirates Nuclear Energy Corporation (ENEC). A corporation, wholly Abu Dhabi-owned, charged with developing nuclear power plants within the UAE. ENEC will contract with a primary contractor for the construction of Abu Dhabi's nuclear plants.
- International Advisory Board. This advisory body, to include former heads of national regulatory bodies, nuclear industry leaders, and recognized academic authorities, will report directly to the Ministry of Presidential Affairs and provide independent assessments of the status and performance of the various entities associated with the UAE civil nuclear program, as well as analyze progress made in addressing any areas of potential concern.

ENEC announced in December 2009 that it had selected a consortium led by Korea Electric Power Corporation (KEPCO) to design, build and help operate civil nuclear power plants for the UAE peaceful nuclear energy program. The KEPCO team includes US-based Westinghouse. The first of the four units is scheduled to begin providing electricity to the grid in 2017, with the three later units being completed by 2020.

In December 2010 nine thousand pages application to build first nuclear power station was submitted to FANR and is currently under review.