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Department of Energy Announces New Nuclear Initiative

Global Nuclear Energy Partnership to expand safe, clean, reliable, affordable nuclear energy worldwide

WASHINGTON, DC – As part of President Bush’s Advanced Energy Initiative, Secretary of Energy Samuel W. Bodman announced today a \$250 million Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 request to launch the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP). This new initiative is a comprehensive strategy to enable the expansion of emissions-free nuclear energy worldwide by demonstrating and deploying new technologies to recycle nuclear fuel, minimize waste, and improve our ability to keep nuclear technologies and materials out of the hands of terrorists.

“GNEP brings the promise of virtually limitless energy to emerging economies around the globe, in an environmentally friendly manner while reducing the threat of nuclear proliferation. If we can make GNEP a reality, we can make the world a better, cleaner, safer place to live,” Secretary Sam Bodman said.

As the United States’ economy and economies around the world continue to grow, the need for abundant energy resources will also grow. Nuclear energy is safe, environmentally clean, reliable, and affordable. Through GNEP, the United States will work with other nations possessing advanced nuclear technologies to develop new proliferation-resistant recycling technologies in order to produce more energy, reduce waste and minimize proliferation concerns. Additionally, these partner nations will develop a fuel services program to provide nuclear fuel to developing nations allowing them to enjoy the benefits of abundant sources of clean, safe nuclear energy in a cost effective manner in exchange for their commitment to forgo enrichment and reprocessing activities, also alleviating proliferation concerns.

The Global Nuclear Energy Partnership has four main goals. First, reduce America’s dependence on foreign sources of fossil fuels and encourage economic growth. Second, recycle nuclear fuel using new proliferation-resistant technologies to recover more energy and reduce waste. Third, encourage prosperity growth and clean development around the world. And fourth, utilize the latest technologies to reduce the risk of nuclear proliferation worldwide.

The GNEP strategy includes seven elements, outlined by Secretary Bodman today:

1. Building of a new generation of nuclear power plants in the United States.
2. Developing and deploying new nuclear recycling technologies.
3. Working to effectively manage and eventually store spent nuclear fuel in the United States.
4. Designing Advance Burner Reactors that would produce energy from recycled nuclear fuel.
5. Establishing a fuel services program that would allow developing nations to acquire and use nuclear energy economically while minimizing the risk of nuclear proliferation.
6. Developing and constructing small scale reactors designed for the needs of developing countries.
7. Improving nuclear safeguards to enhance the proliferation-resistance and safety of expanded nuclear power.

As GNEP is developed, the U.S. Department of Energy will work with the U.S. State Department to engage international partners to participate in this new initiative.

For more information visit <http://www.gnep.energy.gov/>

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