



*Nuclear Free Local Authorities Steering Committee*

# information

**NFLA Media release - for immediate release, 13<sup>th</sup> June 2011**

## **NFLA supports important Westminster seminar on the future of nuclear power following the Fukushima disaster**

The Chair and senior councillors from the Nuclear Free Local Authorities (NFLA) will be amongst the audience of an important Westminster seminar considering the future direction of UK nuclear policy following the Fukushima disaster in Japan (1).

The NFLA are one of the supporting organisations to the seminar 'Fukushima: Lessons Learned for UK New Nuclear Build', which is being held in the House of Commons Committee Room 8 on the afternoon of the 14<sup>th</sup> June. The seminar has been organised by the Nuclear Consulting Group, an independent group of leading UK academics and experts in energy, waste and nuclear policy.

Following the March 11<sup>th</sup> earthquake and tsunami on the north east coast of Japan, four of the six nuclear reactors at the Fukushima Dai-ichi site were badly damaged, leading to the worst nuclear emergency since the Chernobyl disaster. The UK Government has initiated a UK nuclear safety review led by Chief Nuclear Inspector Mike Weightman, and he recently provided an interim report of the incident (2). This Westminster seminar will consider the key issues and implications of the Fukushima disaster and analyse the interim findings of Dr Weightman's report.

The seminar is being hosted by Caroline Lucas MP and is supported by a cross-party panel of MPs including Andrew George (Lib Dem), Paul Flynn (Labour), Angus MacNeil (SNP) and Mark Durkan (SDLP). The seminar will be chaired by the leading environmentalist and former Chair of the Sustainable Development Commission, Sir Jonathan Porritt.

Amongst the speakers are some of the leading independent analysts of nuclear and renewable energy policy in the country, including:

- John Large, International Nuclear Consulting Engineer, Large & Associates;
- Professor Tom Burke, founding Director of E3G and former environmental advisor to previous UK Governments;
- Andrew Warren, Director of the Association for the Conservation of Energy;
- Professor Steve Thomas, Professor of Energy Policy at Greenwich University
- Dr Paul Dorfman, NCG Facilitator and Senior Researcher at Warwick University Business School.

The audience for this seminar will include MPs from all UK political parties, as well as a broad range of stakeholders including Policy-makers, Government Departments, Nuclear Regulators, UK and EU Nuclear Industry, EU state nuclear advisors, NGOs, CBOs, and Independent experts.

Ongoing events at the Fukushima nuclear plant have had considerable impact on the UK public, and may impact on plans for new nuclear reactor build and on UK and EU energy and economic futures. The German Chancellor Angela Merkel has backed proposals to shut down all of the country's 17 nuclear power plants by 2022, whilst hitting CO<sub>2</sub> targets, but the UK Coalition Government still plans for a significant nuclear 'renaissance'. Given the high-level speakers and attendees, and their very different 'take' on nuclear power, it's likely that the discussion will be both informed and divergent.

NFLA Chair, Bailie George Regan, says:

"The NFLA is delighted to support this NCG seminar and has worked closely with groups to promote it to a wide cross-section of stakeholders in the nuclear debate. The response to Fukushima in the UK

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sets a critical pointer in our future energy policy – should we follow the Germans and the Swiss and the Scots and ditch new nuclear build, or should we follow the French and build up to 14 new reactors? The NFLA firmly believes that, out of the tragedy of Fukushima, can come a genuinely enlightened new UK energy policy – a renewable energy mix, strong Council-led support for energy efficiency and a decentralised energy market promoting a plethora of innovative microgeneration projects. I am looking forward to debating this with the speakers and the sceptics in Parliament and challenging the need for a nuclear renaissance.”

The NFLA are also supporting a follow-on September Westminster seminar with the NCG and the group ‘No Need for Nuclear’ considering the final Weightman report and the alternatives to new build, and a series of regional autumn seminars in Lancaster, Bristol, Norwich and London around the development of the key new nuclear sites.

Ends.

## **Further information**

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## **Notes to Editors:**

- (1) The flyer for the seminar is attached with this media release. The seminar will take place at 2pm – 3.30pm in House of Commons Committee Room 8. The seminar has been organised by the NCG and is supported by a cross-party panel of MPs, the NFLA and the group ‘No Need for Nuclear’.
- (2) The NFLA have produced a detailed Policy Briefing on the Fukushima incident. It can be downloaded from:  
[http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A197\\_\(NB83\)\\_Fukushima\\_and\\_Weightman\\_review.pdf](http://www.nuclearpolicy.info/docs/briefings/A197_(NB83)_Fukushima_and_Weightman_review.pdf)

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