

Patron: The Most Revd Thabo Makgoba , Archbishop of Cape Town



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President Jacob Gedleyihlekisa Zuma
The Presidency
South Africa

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Cc Minister of Energy; Minister of Human Settlements; Minister of Defence

Dear President Zuma

We are writing to you to express our deep concern that government leaders continue to see additional nuclear energy as part of our country's energy future. The Western Cape Religious Leaders Forum, a body representing all the major faith communities in the Western Cape, endorses the statement deploring the continued inclusion of nuclear energy in our country's energy future which was sent to you by the KZN Inter-Religious Council, dated 31 May 2012 (copy attached).

We have no political or economic vested interests in our country's energy future. What we want is a fair, equitable, sustainable and safe future for all life sharing this beautiful land God has given us.

- A nuclear energy future will leave generations of South Africans with a toxic radio-active legacy to manage - acid mine drainage is already proving to be enough of a challenge!
- Because nuclear technology is associated with the military and is dangerous, it requires high levels of secrecy. Anything that is not open and transparent lays itself open to corruption. Civil society is highly mistrustful of nuclear energy.
- Nuclear technology is centralised and requires a small, highly skilled work force. It will not provide what we so urgently need: skills training and massive employment opportunities.
- Nuclear power is exorbitantly expensive and with long build times, construction costs are likely to escalate way above budget. The media mentions amounts ranging between R300bn and R600bn for SA's nuclear build programme. This is equivalent to one third of the 2012 national budget! Who pays for the de-commissioning of power plants when we are no longer around? This will be another expensive legacy we leave our children.
- Nuclear plants take years to construct. We need energy security now, not in ten years' time.

As religious leaders, we ask you to heed our call and listen to civil society:

We want a renewable energy future now!

Renewable energy is safe, will create thousands of jobs and can be installed quickly – within a year. It is decentralised, will not damage our climate, can be constructed on large and small scales, will be cost effective in the long-run and private enterprise is longing to invest in it!

Please act now with inspired leadership before it is too late.

Yours sincerely

Dr. R. Omar
WCRLF Chairperson