International Environmental NGO
FoE Japan

PRESS RELEASE: Nuclear Power Is Not a Climate Solution; Instead, It Is a Problem!-100 Civil Society Groups Launch Joint Statement at COP31

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Climate Nuclear

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100 Civil Society Groups Launch Joint Statement at COP31

Ahead of the People’s Summit in Antalya, movements from around the world challenge the nuclear industry’s growing influence over climate policy and call for a just transition based on renewable energy

ANTALYA, TÜRKİYE – On 13 November, one day before the opening of the People's Summit alongside the UN Climate Change Conference (COP31), 100 environmental groups, climate justice movements, Indigenous representatives and public health advocates released a joint statement declaring that **nuclear power is not a solution to the climate crisis, but a huge problem.**

The statement challenges the growing political push to expand nuclear energy in the name of climate action, particularly the pledge by a coalition of willing countries on the sidelines of COP28 to triple global nuclear power capacity by 2050. It warns that this ambition is unrealistic, economically costly, socially unjust, bound by long lead times, and dangerously disconnected from the urgent need to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

As governments gather in Türkiye to discuss the global energy transition, the joint statement calls on COP31 delegates and governments worldwide to reject the pledge to triple nuclear power capacity and end public subsidies, climate finance and green investment incentives for nuclear energy and prioritize proven renewable energy technologies, including solar, wind and geothermal, alongside energy efficiency, storage and grid modernization as well as respect Indigenous Peoples' rights and ensure free, prior and informed consent in all energy and resource decisions.

Read Full statement

Quotes

"Nuclear power plants are not the solution to the climate crisis; instead, they are the problem. At a time when reactors even in Europe are being forced offline for months due to warming river and sea waters, advocating for Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant in the Mediterranean, where summer sea temperatures reach 32°C, and for the Sinop and Thrace projects in the fragile, enclosed Black Sea is simply unscientific. Far from being profitable, these projects are classic "stranded assets" that fail to ensure energy security while actively threatening ecological security through warming

intake water and rising sea levels. Furthermore, the discharge water released from these plants will adversely affect biodiversity; in fact, having two projects in the Black Sea will create a cumulative impact, generating heat islands. Additionally, the project in Thrace will threaten biodiversity and our unique ecosystems by drying out its rare floodplain forests." Pınar Demircan, nukleersiz.org , Turkey

"Fifteen years after the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster, the accident is far from over, and many people continue to suffer its consequences. Contaminated water and soil resulting from the disaster create new problems, while the roadmap for decommissioning the plant sees no prospect. With no final disposal site for high-level radioactive waste in sight, the Japanese government is nevertheless pursuing the continued use and expansion of nuclear power. A nuclear accident can happen in any country. Even without an accident, the risks of radioactive waste and radiation exposure remain. Japan must share the lessons of Fukushima with the world and advance climate policies grounded in the principles of climate justice."— Ayumi Fukakusa, FoE Japan

"If the global leaders are serious about addressing climate change and the high cost of electricity and ensuring stable supply of energy, why build nuclear plants when they are too costly and take a longer time to build compared to safer, renewable energy? Moreover, nuclear waste management and decommissioning remain impossible challenges as experienced even by nuclear-powered countries.Public money should be taken out of nuclear investment, communities carry the risk and pay for it to boot!"-Derek Cabe, Nuclear Free Bataan Movement-Philippines

""South Korea already has the highest density of nuclear reactors in the world, yet it signed the COP28 pledge to triple nuclear power and this year confirmed two new large reactors and an SMR. But Korea's nuclear industry is a story of repeated failure. Hundreds of millions of dollars have been poured into SMRs, yet SMART, the world's first SMR to receive standard design approval back in 2012, has never been built anywhere. Its successor, i-SMR, cannot run before 2035. Exports are collapsing too: after an unfair deal with Westinghouse, Korea pulled out of bid after bid in Europe,

and even its only European project, in Czechia, has seen construction contract talks break down. Spent fuel storage is already close to full, and there is still no answer for permanent disposal. The government uses AI data centers to justify nuclear expansion, but reactors arriving in the late 2030s are no answer for data centers that need power now. With renewables at only about 10% of its electricity, Korea needs a just transition to renewable energy, not a nuclear industry with no future."
— Esther Yu, Korean Federation for Environmental Movements (KFEM)

- Note to editors:
  - At COP28 in Dubai in December 2023, more than 20 countries launched the voluntary Declaration to Triple Nuclear Energy Capacity by 2050.
  - According to the IEA, there are 32 countries with nuclear power totalling 413 gigawatts (GW) . In order to meet the tripling target, 40GW must be added annually throughout the 2030s and 2040s (World Energy Outlook 2025 , Box 7.3).

✳ Nuclear Free Bataan Movement drafted the original text.

– Joint Statement by Civil Society –
Nuclear Power Is a Costly Distraction from Real Climate Action

We—the undersigned civil society organizations, climate justice movements, Indigenous leaders, and public health advocates—demand that world leaders reject the nuclear lobby, enforce real climate accountability, and invest solely in safe, accessible, and immediate solutions.

Reject the unrealistic nuclear pledges.

At a COP28 side event, selected nations pledged to triple global nuclear energy capacity by 2050, creating a dangerous delusion.

As COP31 focuses on zero-waste targets, real emissions reductions, and accelerating a practical clean energy transition, we must face the reality that nuclear energy cannot deliver on these promises.

Promoting nuclear energy, whether through massive traditional reactors or the heavily promoted but unproven Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), diverts critical funding, public subsidies, and political will away from proven, safe, and rapidly deployable renewable energy sources such as solar and wind.

We note that governments pursue nuclear power for a range of reasons, not all of them overt.

Nuclear power plants require huge funding, well beyond renewables, and this can become an easy source of corruption, inadequate standards of construction, insufficient safety, and diversion of fissile materials that could contribute to weapons proliferation. We stand together to demand that world leaders abandon nuclear energy and prioritize genuine climate solutions now at this critical juncture of a global climate catastrophe.

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Nuclear Power Fails To Be Viable

• Building a nuclear power plant takes over a decade from planning to grid connection. Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) are still experimental and will not be commercially viable in time to meet the urgent 2030 emission reduction targets. In contrast, solar and wind power can be built much faster and at lower cost.

• Nuclear construction often results in significant cost overruns, draining public funds. Every dollar spent on nuclear bailouts is a dollar taken away from community grid modernization, battery storage, and affordable renewable energy.

• Long-term storage of radioactive waste remains a challenge even after decades of the nuclear age. SMRs exacerbate the problem, generating up to thirty times more nuclear waste per unit of energy produced than large reactors.

• The nuclear fuel chain has adversely impacted Indigenous peoples, rural communities, and marginalized groups without their free, prior, and informed consent.

• Nuclear power can be vulnerable to climate impacts due to the large amount of water required for cooling. Rising sea levels, warming oceans and seas, and severe droughts make nuclear plants more vulnerable and dangerous in a changing climate.

• Nuclear power is easily weaponized, and facilities are increasingly targeted and vulnerable in times of conflict. Recent attacks on nuclear facilities in Ukraine and multiple nations in the Middle East have highlighted this threat.

Our Global Demands for COP Delegates

1. End Nuclear Pledges, Subsidies, and Covert Funding: Reject pledges to triple nuclear energy and explicitly exclude nuclear power from green taxonomies, climate finance, and government subsidies—direct all financial resources to genuine renewables, energy efficiency, and grid upgrades. Subject all nuclear projects to truthful carbon-emission accounting across construction, operation, decommissioning, and long-term custodianship.

2. Prioritize Community-Led Renewables: To phase out fossil fuels, rapidly expand proven, accessible technologies such as wind, solar, geothermal, and long-term storage.

3. Respect Indigenous Rights and Land: Apply the principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) to all energy decisions, particularly those involving mining and toxic waste storage.

Our Country-Specific Demands:

ASIA – INDIA

Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Independence Day speech (August 15, 2026) declared that India has turned "no-go areas" into "go-ahead areas" to secure energy independence. His government now targets 200 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047, amending the Atomic Energy Act (1962) and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (2010) to allow private companies and foreign investors into nuclear reactor construction and operation. The new SHANTI Act (2025) further entrenches private and foreign control, diluting liability protections and paving the way for corporate operators of nuclear plants and SMRs. This exposes communities to unsafe technologies, capped compensation (US$460 million per accident), and weakened accountability—despite global lessons from Chernobyl and Fukushima.

We demand the immediate halt of nuclear expansion under SHANTI, restore and strengthen full supplier liability, reject private operator entry, and prioritize renewables, safety, and energy democracy over corporate and foreign interests.

ASIA – Japan

Having experienced the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Fukushima Daiichi accident—which, even after 15 years, still leaves 309 km^2 designated as "difficult-to-return," and more than 40,000 people displaced as evacuees—we demand an end to reactor restarts, new-build "replacements," lifespan extensions, and SMR development, and we call for public funds to be redirected to renewable energy instead.

ASIA – Philippines

We demand a total halt to all nuclear energy projects, the repeal of Executive Order No. 164, the PH-US 123 Agreement for civil nuclear cooperation, the Memorandum of Understanding with the Korean Government and Korea Hydro and Nuclear Power (KHNP) for Bataan Nuclear Power Plant rehabilitation and new nuclear builds and fast-tracked energy approvals, and an immediate shift of public financing toward community-owned solar, wind, and indigenous micro-geothermal systems to ensure a just and democratic energy transition.

ASIA – SOUTH KOREA

The Lee Jae-myung administration in South Korea has decided to construct two large-scale nuclear power plants and one experimental SMR. Furthermore, the Lee administration is leveraging 'three major mega-projects' as a pretext to push for an even broader expansion of nuclear power. This policy is not only proceeding in an indiscriminate and undemocratic manner but is also hindering the deployment of renewable energy and perpetuating reliance on fossil fuels. Additionally, Lee's persistent requests to the U.S. for the acquisition of nuclear-powered submarines and authorization for spent nuclear fuel reprocessing are exacerbating military tensions in East Asia. The South Korean government must halt three major mega-projects that aggravate the climate crisis. It must also stop expanding nuclear power and instead establish a rapid decarbonization energy plan that prioritizes renewable energy. Also, it must abandon any attempts to secure the potential for nuclear armament.

ASIA – Taiwan

Taiwan shut down its last operating nuclear reactor on May 17, 2025. Its three nuclear power plants are now all being decommissioned, marking the complete phase-out of nuclear power. Without nuclear power, Taiwan has maintained a stable electricity supply while its economy has continued to grow.

Despite continued pressure and lobbying from the U.S. nuclear industry urging Taiwan's political parties to restart nuclear power, we call on Taiwan to firmly maintain its nuclear-free status and continue its energy transition toward a system based primarily on renewable energy. Taiwan should reject the restart of aging and unsafe nuclear power plants while also addressing its responsibilities following nuclear decommissioning and actively pursuing a permanent solution for radioactive waste.

OCEANIA – Australia

We note and welcome that the Australian people comprehensively rejected plans for domestic nuclear power at their 2025 national election. We call for an end to the

AUKUS nuclear submarine project, which contributes to regional tension and military escalation, undermines the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Treaty of Rarotonga (South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty), and threatens peace. We call for Australia to unequivocally reject facilitating nuclear weapons and to sign the UN Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

EURASIA – TURKEY

Turkey's energy policy under the 2053 net-zero strategy has a 20-GW capacity target. Beyond the 4.8 GW Akkuyu plant currently under construction, there is a revised plan for the 4.8 GW Sinop Project, a 5.6 GW facility plan in Thrace, and a 4.8 GW allocation for Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). Despite 16 years, Akkuyu NPP has made no contribution to the grid. Granting a foreign state ownership over sovereign national territory for the first time in the world, Akkuyu NPP deepens Turkey's strategic dependence on Russia. While the Mediterranean is warming 20 percent faster than the global average, the operational viability of the Akkuyu NPP remains in question. The government plans to exercise similar agreements for other projects, and Turkey will be dependent on other countries as well.

Turkey is a seismic country and is not suitable for underground storage of nuclear waste. We want the government to abandon its nuclear projects. Turkey has abundant renewable energy capacity which can meet energy demands without relying on coal and nuclear.

ASIA-INDONESIA

The Prabowo Subianto administration has elevated nuclear power from a last option to a strategic energy source through the National Energy Policy (Government Regulation 40/2025), which targets 44 GW by 2060, and the President's Special Envoy for Climate and Energy has announced 7 GW by 2034. These plans target small islands and coastal areas in Bangka Belitung, Semesak Island in West Kalimantan, and the waters off North Halmahera in North Maluku, where Rosatom agreed in October 2026 to deploy two floating nuclear reactors. This policy is proceeding without transparency and without the consent of the coastal, fishing, and

Indigenous communities whose livelihoods are at stake, while distracting from Indonesia's vast renewable energy potential. Furthermore, agreements with Rosatom and other foreign nuclear vendors deepen Indonesia's energy dependence on foreign powers. The Indonesian government must immediately halt all plans for nuclear power development, remove nuclear energy targets from the National Energy Policy, National Electricity General Plan, and Electricity Supply Business Plan, refrain from signing the regulation establishing a Nuclear Energy Programme Implementing Organization (NEPIO), and exclude nuclear power from the Renewable and New Energy Bill. It must also cancel the Rosatom deal and all other nuclear projects and agreements and shift to community-based renewable energy, especially for small islands, coastal areas, and eastern Indonesia.

Endorsed By

Citizens' Nuclear Information Center (Japan)
Don't Nuke the Climate (Australia)
Green Citizens' Action Alliance (Taiwan)
Citizens of the Earth (Taiwan)
Homemakers United Foundation (Taiwan)
Korean Federation for Environmental Movement (Korea)
Nuclear Free Bataan Movement (Philippines)
Nuclear Free Bataan Movement Network (Philippines)
Nuclear Information and Resource Service (USA)
No Nukes Asia Forum – Japan (Japan)
Taiwan Environmental Protection Union (Taiwan)
Friends of the Earth – Japan (Japan)
No Nukes Asia Forum – Philippines
People's Movement Against Nuclear Energy, Koodankulam (India)
National Alliance of Anti-Nuclear Movements (India)
No Nukes Asia Forum – India
Nukleersiz (Turkey)
Green Thought Association (Turkey)

Sinop Anti-nuclear Platform (Turkey)

Sinop Anti-Nuclear Platform Association (Turkey)

Sinop Çevre Dostları Dernegĭ (Friends of Environment Association) (Turkey)

Mersin Anti-nuclear Platform (Turkey)

Nature and Culture Association Kırklareli-Thrace (Turkey)

Cyprus Anti-Nuclear Platform (Cyprus)

Arrêt du Nucléaire Drôme Ardèche (France)

Gemeinsam für Sonne und Freiheit (Austria)

Ecodefense (Russia)

Action des Citoyens pour le Désarmement Nucléaire (France)

Sydney Peace & Justice Coalition (Australia)

Friends of the Earth Australia (Australia)

Energy Justice Actions (Korea)

Center for Ecological and Wellbeing Economics (India)

Blue Dalian (China)

Occupy Bergen County, New Jersey (USA)

Black Environmental Initiative (Canada)

Oregon PeaceWorks (USA)

No Nukes Asia Forum Taiwan (Taiwan)

Executive Committee for Anti-Nuclear Labor Action (Japan)

Linking Peace&Life (Japan)

Goodbye Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Plant Project (Japan)

The Association of Buddhists Opposed to Nuclear Power (Japan)

Let’s Stop Nuclear Power! Plaza in Front of Kyushu Electric Power Headquarters (Japan)

Sanrizuka Kansai Executive Committee (Japan)

Wahana Lingkungan Hidup Indonesia (WALHI)/Friends of the Earth Indonesia

WISE Netherlands

Citizens Awareness Network (USA)

Friends of the Earth Asia Pacific

Ontario Clean Air Alliance (Canada)

Grandmothers Act to Save the Planet (Canada)

Canadian Health Association for Sustainability and Equity (Canada)

Hokkaido Active Citizen‘s Association of Science (Japan)

Friends of the Earth Adelaide (Australia)

Women Against Nuclear Power (Finland)

Women for Peace – Finland (Finland)

Agenda project (Japan)

Cumbria and Lancashire Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (UK)

Snake River Alliance (USA)

Hiroshima Network to Stop Kaminoseki Nuclear Plant (Japan)

Alliance for Nuclear Free New York (USA)

Peace Boat (Japan)

Nuclear Free Japan (Japan)

Movement for Nationalism and Democracy (Philippines)

Youth for Nationalism and Democracy (Philippines)

The Liaison Committee for Organizations of Victims of the Nuclear Disaster (Japan)

Nos Voisins Lointains 3.11 (France)

Sentinels for Environmental Protection and Regeneration (Philippines)

Hiraya Laya—Vision for Liberation Philippines

Unity of Fisherfolk Organizations – Philippines

NO nukes! Network Yamaguchi (Japan)

Unitarian Universalists for Just Economic Community (USA)

Nuclear Watch South, Atlanta, Georgia (USA)

Ground Zero Center for Nonviolent Action (USA)

50by30Niagara (Canada)

Green Step Forward (China)

Environmental Jurists Association (Taiwan)

Chutka Atomic Energy Anti-Nuclear Movement (India)

Women Engage for a Common Future International

Taiwan Climate Action Network (Taiwan)

Ecoaction (Ukraine)

Unity of Women for Freedom (Philippines)

Parents for future Freiburg (Germany)

Indian Doctors for Peace and Development (India)

Jharkahndi Organisation Against Radiation (India)

New Wind For Rokkasho (Japan)

Femin Women's Democratic Club (Japan)

Citizens Against Fukushima Aging Nuclear Power Plants (Japan)

Goodbye Nukes Shikoku Network (Japan)

Genpatsu Sayonara Shikoku Network (Japan)

Takagi Fund for Citizen Science (Japan)

Nara Datsu Genpatsu Network (Japan)

Forum Against Disasters project in Konkan (India)

Nuclear Issues Subcommittee of the Kanagawa District of the United Church of Christ in Japan

Sayonara Genpatsu Düsseldorf e.V. (Germany)

350.org Japan

Coalition for Responsible Energy Development in New Brunswick (Canada)

GENSUIKIN (Japan Congress Against A-and H-Bombs)

Peace Women Partners (Philippines)

STOP the War Coalition Philippines

Philippines Women Network Against Militarism

Young Bataeños for Environmental Advocacy Network (YBEAN) – Philippines