

41. We suggest that country consultative groups should be set up for the new States, when appropriate, in order to foster close cooperation among the States concerned, international institutions and partners. The task of these groups would be to encourage structural reforms and to coordinate technical assistance.

Safety of nuclear power plants in the new independent States of the former Soviet Union and in central and eastern Europe

42. While we recognise the important role nuclear power plays in global energy supplies, the safety of Soviet-design nuclear power plants gives cause for great concern. Each State, through its safety authorities and plant operators, is itself responsible for the safety of its nuclear power plants. The new States concerned of the former Soviet Union and the countries of central and eastern Europe must give high priority to eliminating this danger. These efforts should be part of a market-oriented reform of energy policies encouraging commercial financing for the development of the energy sector.
43. A special effort should be made to improve the safety of these plants. We offer the States concerned our support within the framework of a multilateral programme of action. We look to them to cooperate fully. We call upon other interested States to contribute as well.
44. The programme of action should comprise immediate measures in the following areas:
- operational safety improvements;
 - near-term technical improvements to plants based on safety assessments;
 - enhancing regulatory regimes.
- Such measures can achieve early and significant safety gains.
45. In addition, the programme of action is to create the basis for longer-term safety improvements by the examination of
- the scope for replacing less safe plants by the development of alternative energy sources and the more efficient use of energy,
 - the potential for upgrading plants of more recent design.

Complementary to this, we will pursue the early completion of a convention on nuclear safety.