

This emphasizes the need to provide continuing government support for long-term safety-related research by AECL.

ENERGY POLICY

Energy is one of the most important resources for modern society. Events such as the 1973 oil embargo and the 1997 Kyoto Protocol illustrate the importance of a national policy that will safeguard Canada's energy supply while supporting global objectives. As noted above, Canada's mix of electrical energy sources has benefited the nation by providing economic and reliable electricity with much lower emissions of greenhouse gases and other air pollutants per unit of electricity generated than almost any other industrialized country. Its nuclear power program and nuclear R&D expertise also allow Canada political, diplomatic and technological options not available to countries without such expertise.

INTERNATIONAL INITIATIVES

Canada is a member of the G-7, a position from which it can contribute broadly to the development and well-being of the world community and assist in meeting international objectives. Canada's contribution to international safeguards, and foreign policy initiatives, such as the proposal to destroy weapons-grade plutonium in CANDU reactors, are only possible because Canada has a successful nuclear power program.

The World Bank projects that the world population will increase to 7 billion by 2010. Nuclear energy can make significant contributions to impoverished and rapidly growing societies in the future. CANDU reactors could not only produce electricity, but could also be used to provide fresh water from sea water on a scale sufficient for the agricultural, industrial and personal needs of large populations in developing nations.

ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY

Many countries with successful nuclear programs have National Laboratories, where governments support the laboratory infrastructure and provide direct funding for activities that are in the national interest. Since some of AECL's R&D resources and programs are of interest to government Ministries, the AECL, non-nuclear industries, research organizations and universities, they should be treated as a national asset