

Alliance for Nuclear Accountability

*A national network of organizations working to address issues
of nuclear weapons production and waste cleanup*

For Immediate Release: October 16, 2008

For more information contact:

Susan Gordon (505) 473-1670 sgordon@ananuclear.org

Nickolas Roth (202) 544-0217 nroth@ananuclear.org

ANA condemns plan to restart dangerous and dirty reprocessing

The Department of Energy (DOE) this week is releasing the Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP) Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) that promotes returning to “reprocessing” spent nuclear reactor fuel. Reprocessing, incorrectly referred to as “recycling,” extracts weapons-useable plutonium and is the fundamental link between a nuclear reactor and a plutonium bomb.

“GNEP would endanger the environment, encourage nuclear bomb-making, squander U.S. taxpayer dollars, and deepen the nuclear waste problem,” states Susan Gordon, director of the Alliance for Nuclear Accountability. “Under the GNEP plan, some countries would supply and fuel nuclear reactors for other as-yet-unnamed countries that would agree to forgo uranium enrichment and plutonium reprocessing. Promoting “nuclear-have” countries and “nuclear-have-not” countries has proven to be a disaster for nonproliferation efforts.”

The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability is a national network of more than 30 member organizations many of whom live in communities that will potentially be impacted by GNEP. These communities face new uranium enrichment plants, new contaminated waste and dump sites, and new nuclear reactors at a time when DOE is cutting spending on cleaning up past nuclear waste contamination.

The Draft PEIS has already faced serious criticism due to its failure to provide any cost analysis and fully address environmental and security concerns, failure to select a specific site for a reprocessing complex, and unsubstantiated claims that reprocessing reduces the need for a geologic repository.

“At a time when the U.S. is experiencing a struggling economy promoting a reprocessing program with a bailout-sized \$700 billion estimated price tag is fiscally irresponsible” states Nickolas Roth, ANA program director. “DOE’s track record for meeting project budgets and timelines is dismal.”

Since 2006, the Bush administration has promoted GNEP as a way to solve the nuclear waste problem in the U.S. and support the expansion of nuclear power. However, recent studies by the National Academy of Sciences, Government Accountability Office, the International Panel on Fissile Materials, and a nuclear industry-sponsored report by the Keystone Center have refuted these claims and expressed further concerns regarding dangerous pollution, nuclear proliferation, and exorbitant cost.

Public hearings will be held in a limited number of locations, including Hobbs, Carlsbad, Roswell, and Los Alamos, NM; Pasco, WA; Hood River, OR; Idaho Falls, ID; Paducah, KY; Piketon, OH; Oak Ridge, TN; Graniteville, SC; Bolingbrook, IL; and Washington, DC.

###

1400 Maclovía Street #6, Santa Fe, NM 87505, 505 473-1670
322 4th Street, NE, Washington DC. 20002, 202-544-0217
www.ananuclear.org