

Joint Statement on the Future of Nuclear Fuel Recycling

Introduction

JNFL, whose main shareholders are Japanese utilities, and AREVA agreed that it is beneficial to co-operate with each other in order to ensure early and safe operation of spent fuel recycling at Rokkasho-Mura as well as their long-term and sustainable contribution to the Japanese nuclear industry.

AREVA, through safe and stable commercial operation of the La Hague Reprocessing Plant and the MELOX MOX Fuel Fabrication Plant for many years, has accumulated and owns a great deal of technical expertise and experience for proper management of a reprocessing plant and a MOX fuel fabrication plant.

By virtue of the technical assistance provided by AREVA for more than ten years as well as abundant technical knowledge and know-how obtained to date, JNFL now has sufficient technical capability needed for safe and stable operation of the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant. This was demonstrated by the test operations conducted in the past years, including the recent successful test results obtained at the Vitrification Facility.

In order to complete the nuclear fuel cycle in Japan, it is now necessary for JNFL to facilitate completion and operation of its MOX fuel fabrication plant which is currently under construction.

For the future development of nuclear fuel recycling, it is indispensable to continuously strive to improve the safety and economic efficiency of the plants and to explore the potential for new business development.

In light of the foregoing, future co-operation between JNFL and AREVA will cover the following areas:

1. Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant

AREVA and JNFL will co-operate on all facilities of the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant (not only the facilities covered by past technology transfers but also all other facilities, including, in particular, the KA vitrification facility) in order to prepare the commercial start-up of the Plant. This will include but not be limited to: co-operation on active tests, readiness of the facilities prior to commercial start-up, smooth start-up of commercial operation, capacity ramp-up and plant optimization.

2. Vitrification

AREVA and JNFL will co-operate on all studies required by JNFL to facilitate efficient operation of the KA vitrification facility. This will include but not be limited to: additional R&D, maintenance protocols, waste management and production optimization.

JNFL and AREVA will also continue discussions on the future vitrification technology in order to achieve more efficient recycling of spent fuel.

3. MOX Fuel Fabrication Plant

AREVA will support JNFL in constructing and commissioning JNFL's MOX fuel fabrication plant. This will include but not be limited to: sharing MELOX experience, providing information and data on the required safety analyses and supporting the testing and commissioning phase.

4. Safety Improvement of Spent Fuel Recycling Facilities

JNFL and AREVA will share information on safety improvements in the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant and the La Hague Reprocessing Plant. Regular cross reviews of safety improvements will be organized in order for each party to benefit from the improvements of the other and to contribute to formation of safety standards.

JNFL and AREVA will also review the compliance of their respective Plants with international standards applicable to nuclear fuel cycle facilities. In this review, it is important to take account of characteristics that are unique to reprocessing facilities, such as different time margins before reaching severe accidents.

As leading companies in the nuclear fuel cycle business, AREVA and JNFL will continue to implement actions for the improvement of plant safety and will make efforts to develop good practices for the global industry.

5. Strategic Partnership between JNFL and AREVA on Spent Fuel Recycling

JNFL and AREVA will start discussions towards strengthening a strategic partnership between the Rokkasho Reprocessing Plant and the La Hague Reprocessing Plant.

This partnership will include R&D projects of mutual interest consistent with the principles set forth in this Joint Statement. These projects will, when appropriate, be carried out with participation of other research organisations.

It will also include joint actions for the development of new business of mutual interest for both parties.