

ORAL PRESENTATION – LTO KOEBERG NUCLEAR POWER STATION – SUBMITTED BY CONCERNED CITIZEN, TABLEVIEW

3 February 2024 CHURCH ON THE RISE, TABLEVIEW

Good Morning ladies and Gentleman,

I would like to begin by saying that I reject the consultation process as being unfair due to information being withheld- and the rushed deadlines by the NNR. The notice requiring public participation was only released late November 2023 and the deadline of 15 January 24 for comments was unrealistic due to poor means of communication and many of the public being away over the festive Season - returning from holiday only after the 15th January 2024! To further compound the issue the documents that was needed in order to be adequately informed has not been freely available. The Eskom Safety Report was initially issued with heavily redacted sections, which took legal action for them to eventually release the unredacted version – which ended up being version number THREE!

Furthermore, the Seismic study in the area has not been updated since 1976 - and the Tableview/Dynefontein area is on the Milnerton fault line running directly passed Koeberg Nuclear Power Station. The Operating Technical Specification report has also not been included in Eskom's publicly available publications.

I would like to know if the **IAEA's recommendations for the 14 safety issues** for the improvement of issues affecting an aging power plant has been repaired since the report was issued March 2023. And if not, is there any indication of whether Eskom will invite the IAEA to come and inspect the plant again after the refurbishment work is complete? Hopefully timeously this time without resorting to approaching the PAAI.

The **most concerning of all the safety issues are the cracks appearing in the containment walls**. Reports say it is caused by the chlorine in salt air and Dr Tristan Taylors' comments on the IAEA's report suggests – “the power plant suffers from cracking concrete, large scale delamination and the corrosion of reinforcing bars”. The IAEA believes this might have caused the malfunctioning of some of the elements within the monitoring system. The containment walls are being patched, but what about the ongoing damage to the steel reinforcement from the many years of chlorine ingress? And what has been done to protect the steel from further corrosion? The concrete is a barrier to prevent leakage of radiation to the public so I would like proof to be provided that the cracks that are being filled will be effective.

Eskom's track record with **maintenance issues** has not been good over the years, and now they trying to fast track the implementation - when their initial request for the LTO started in 2010 already. Poor maintenance and inexperienced staff at Eskom have compounded the safety issue. Eskom's more senior engineers and operators have left, replacing them with inexperienced ones who have not been exposed to nuclear engineering. Furthermore, there

has been a disturbing history of accidents, in many cases, due to negligence by the operators - such as “cutting of a safety valve during routine maintenance in 2022” – which Eskom admitted could have had devastating consequences; 91 Workers being contaminated with radioactive Isotope cobalt 58 in 2010 and numerous fires. This puts the nuclear power plant at risk and is a major safety issue for the people of Cape Town.

We live in a very advanced world run by technology – has Eskom considered what the impact of a **Cyberattack** will have on the safety of the plant? This issue was redacted from the safety report – not that we want to know the exact details of how the plant is guarded from external attack, but we do need to know if Eskom has made plans to upgrade their systems to prevent Cyberattacks over the next 20 years? And have they even got the money to do so? The world is in turmoil currently and who is to say that this plant would be used as a weapon against SA? An insurance company, the Alliance Group is taking Cyberattacks and political risk seriously enough to now include in their insurance policies,

I would like to further ask when the **Koeberg Evacuation emergency plan** was last updated - to include **ALL** the new development in the Tableview/Melkbos and surrounding areas. New development has increased beyond anyone’s imagination in recent years and must surely now exceed the building restrictions that apply close to Koeberg. The City of Cape Town has a By Law restricting development which might compromise the effective implementation of the Koeberg Nuclear Emergency Plan – which is within the 5km and 16km radius and classed as “Precautionary action zoning” or “urgent protective action zoning”. The amount of ongoing building in the area might indicate that this is not happening accurately.

The recent **emergency drills** undertaken by Eskom and the City leaves a lot to be desired. It became obvious that there is no adequate equipment available, and the one decontamination chamber resides in Pretoria and not Cape Town. Why this would be is beyond comprehension - seeing that Cape Town has the only nuclear plant in Africa! It remains to be seen how any evacuation plan would practically play out in an event of a disaster and in such a huge area, with a road infrastructure already under duress. The warning system to the public is in the form of sirens and a few cars that Eskom drive around announcing the ‘disaster’ which can not be heard by residents inside their homes. Hearing the sirens would not be enough for anyone to take it seriously, because it would be considered just another Eskom ‘drill’! The dispensing of iodine tablets (which by the way is housed in Athlone) will be a practical impossibility in the areas that need it! I wonder if Eskom will cover the costs of the medical treatment of the many children that would end up with Thyroid cancer in later years?

I live in close proximity to Koeberg, and I am extremely concerned about these safety issues. If there is a major meltdown, the City of Cape Town and surrounding areas would be uninhabitable for an unknown length of time. Tourism is the main source of income for the Western Cape and nobody would want to visit Cape Town after a nuclear accident. A 30km

exclusion radius was set after the meltdown at **Chernobyl** and nobody was allowed to **live or farm** in that radius. A 20km radius zone was set around the **Fukushima plant** - and the Japanese spent approx. R1.59 trillion resolving the issues. How will South Africa whose total tax revenue is currently equal to this amount be able to cope? Many people would lose everything after an accident of this magnitude. **Insurance** would not cover any citizen and for many their life's earnings would be lost.

I believe there are enough causes for concern for the NNR to reject Eskom's LTO application outright, and it is therefore difficult to understand why different dates for the LTO licenses has now been agreed by NNR – based on a mere technicality of different start-up dates when all these safety issues are known. The whole public participation appears flawed to me, and it seems that Eskom are merely going through the motions so that they can be procedurally correct. The question must be asked if the decision has already been made to extend the life of the plant irrespective of the consequence for the people?

Eskom estimates that the current cost of refurbishment is approximately R20 billion, but this figure has not changed since 2010! This is on a plant, which would not be approved anywhere else in the world using this design, because it is less safe than more modern plants. If Eskom can 'be economical with the truth' about the cost - what else are they not telling us, which could affect our safety! I **do not** believe that there has been much transparency during the whole process, and as a citizen of this country, I expect to be protected by an organization that would first and foremost look to the safety of the people .

In ending – I would just like to say: Many people want to live their lives free of worrying about the day to day running of the country. We do not have the time to interpret and analyse the many technical reports that are released – many times in terminology that we don't even understand. There was a very capable '**Citizen Representative**' on the NNR Board who would be the one person looking out for the safety of the public – however this person was fired by Minister Gwede Mantashe – and illegally it seems, because it was subsequently rejected in a SA court! Now we are solely in the hands of the NNR and the SA Government. We look to the 'powers that be' to ensure our safety and ask the right questions of the organization responsible for nuclear on our behalf. And the body that we now can only look to is the **National Nuclear Regulator**. It is the NNR that must be above reproach and act independently of any government influences, and make decisions based purely on the safety standards for the people of South Africa.

Please do the right thing for the people of this beautiful country!

