

**Milena Tatalovic and Dusan Radovanovic, both from Belgrade in Serbia, worked on this contribution. Milena describes the attitude of the Serbian Government towards the nuclear energy. She also mentions one opposition party and the Orthodox Church. Dusan summarizes how the Serbian media deal with this issue.**

**Serbian Government** - The main party in Serbian government is Democratic Party, and it's in coalition with Serbian Socialistic Party and G17 plus. Concerning nuclear energy I came to conclusion that there is no unite opinion on this matter in Serbian government. In 2010 there was great discussion about nuclear energy, since there were some plans in participation in building nuclear power plant in Bulgaria. Serbia should be one of the partners in building this NPP in Bulgaria, if the Croatia drops off this project. The Russia is also interested in building NPP in Serbia, but there is a veto on building NPP-s until 2015. That veto is one of the main reasons why there is no official opinion about nuclear energy. There are plans only in theory. Vice president of Serbian government Bozidar Djelic was one of the first who said that Serbia needs nuclear energy, and called for the review of the veto on building NPP-s. This law (moratorium on NPP-s) is in force since 1986, and it's valid until 2015. Because of this opinion he was criticized in Serbian press and among ecological organizations. There were posters in city center with his face and title Wanted for nuclearisation of Serbia.



Former minister of energy and mining Petar Skundric (replaced just one week ago) was one of the biggest proponents of cooperation with Bulgarians in building joined NPP Belene, but minister of Ecology and environment Oliver Dulic was strictly against it. Many politicians refuse to talk about this subject because of the law. But the question of nuclear energy is very alive in public opinion since 2015 is getting closer.

President of "Environmental Ambassadors" Andjelka Mihajlov on this subject said next : (downloaded from the website NPP-s STOP - <http://stopnuklearkama.webnode.com/> ): "First, there is a moratorium, and secondly, research that we conducted during the summer of 2010 showed that 76 percent of decision makers in anti-nuclear, 16 percent were undecided, which means that this idea is supported by only eight percent of the politicians - said Mihajlov. Asked whether Serbia should build a nuclear plant, our interviewee responds with a categorical "no.""

I couldn't find the opinion on nuclear energy of Serbian Progressive Party (biggest opposition party in Serbia), and also opinion of Serbian Orthodox Church. But as far as I could read the interviews from the leading people in Orthodox Church, Serbian Orthodox church is antinuclear, simply because it does not look favorably on an accelerated scientific and technological development, but supported the return to traditional values.

## Opinions on energy in Serbian media

Articles regarding nuclear energy draw special attention of Serbian public during the last few weeks and dramatic events in Japan. However, topics on nuclear safety and aspects, both positive and negative, of use of NPP's seems to be interesting for bit a longer time – since some speculations of proposed construction of Serbian NPP or Serbo-Bulgarian cooperation in Belene project.

Since there is a moratorium on NPP construction here until 2015, according to Energetics Strategy, statement of Russian ambassador H.E. Konuzin of Serbian plans for construction and initiative of Serbian government found citizens unaware of such aims. As legal aspects (moratorium etc.) are incompatible with these actions, experts claim that referendum should be held on the issue.<sup>1</sup>

Political aspect is quite important here as well, thus one of the journalist made a comment "Nuklearka<sup>2</sup> should not be secret".<sup>3</sup>

Just like many countries, Serbia has growing demands for electricity. There is no doubt that NPP's offer cheap electricity (in long terms), but safety operation and waste storage are main cons, as well as fears of nuclear disaster such as one in Chernobyl, and recent events in Fukushima. (Nuclear challenge in front of Serbia)<sup>4</sup>

Former Minister of Energetics, Petar Škundrić, was in favor of Serbian participation of construction in Belene, Bulgaria. (Take a note that this politician haven't got portfolio, nor the appointment in recently reconstructed Serbian government).<sup>5</sup> However, in December 2010, protest were held by several Serbian and Bulgarian NGO's against construction of Belene, with call for Government (of Serbia) not to take part in the project. With claims that project is 30 years old and

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Ekonomija/123651/Nema-nuklearki-bez-referenduma-> (3.12.2009.)

<sup>2</sup> Serbian colloquial term for nuclear power plant.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.blic.rs/Komentar/Komentar-dana/153985/Nuklearka-ne-sme-bit-tajna> (3.12.2009.)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Ekonomija/204577/Nuklearni-izazov-pred-vratima-Srbije> (28.08.2010.)

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Drustvo/201719/Srbija-jos-razmatra-ucescu-u-gradnji-nuklearne-elektrane-u-Bugarskoj> (7.08.2010.)

Belene is in seismologically active zone, they expressed that Belene is „black hole for money“ and „ecological hazard for countries in the region“.<sup>6</sup>

In the aspect of Japanese nuclear hazards, there have been some coverage on nuclear politics and nuclear surroundings of Serbia.



For instance, there is an article „Romanian „Cernavoda“ would endure strong earthquake“. However, Wikileaks and „Gardian“ revealed documents showing fears of American diplomats in Sofia on Belene safety. At last, vice-president of Serbian government Đelić announced that Serbia no longer as interest in building NPP on Serbian soil. Answering the question on Belene project, he refused to comment as the question should be post to Ministry of Energetics, which is in charge of the matter.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Drustvo/222277/Protest-protiv-izgradnje-nuklearke-Belene> (8.12.2010.)

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Drustvo/224926/Vikiliks-Sumnje-u-bezbednost-bugarske-nuklearke-Belene> (21.12.2010.)