



mineral resources & energy

Department:
Mineral Resources and Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

MEDIA STATEMENT

To: All media
Date: 03 February 2023

DMRE ALLAYS CONCERNS OVER THE EXPIRY OF THE SOUTH AFRICA AND USA NUCLEAR COOPERATION AGREEMENT

The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) has noted news reports regarding the expiry of the Nuclear Cooperation Agreement between South Africa and the United States of America (USA) and would like to give an assurance that there is no immediate crisis.

With many years of strong diplomatic relations between South Africa and the USA, the two states signed a Nuclear Cooperation Agreement on the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy in 1995, which came into effect on 4 December 1997 for a period of 25 years. As such, the term of the Agreement expired by effluxion of time on 4 December 2022.

The DMRE initiated negotiations for the conclusion of a new standardized Nuclear Cooperation Agreement with the USA in 2018. Negotiations on a new Agreement are ongoing and the Parties have resolved to expedite the process, while engaging on measures to ensure continuity of cooperation during the negotiations of the New Nuclear Cooperations Agreement.

The Department has noted that the USA National Regulatory Commission has informed Westinghouse that it has temporarily withdrawn their authorization to supply Eskom Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant with nuclear fuel.

Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant is currently being supplied with nuclear fuel from Westinghouse Electric Company LLC from the USA to load Unit 1, and Framatome from France to load Unit 2. The nuclear fuel for current loading cycle that is in progress has already been purchased and delivered at Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant.

For the next cycle, Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant is expecting fuel to be delivered by Westinghouse Electric Company LLC early 2024.

Therefore, there is no immediate crisis which could exacerbate the loadshedding from Eskom due to Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant. However, the Department notes that urgent resolution is needed to allow Westinghouse Electric Company LLC to provide fuel supply.

The DMRE is working with other Government departments to expedite the negotiations of the new Nuclear Cooperation Agreement with the USA.

We are confident and strongly believe that there is commitment between the Parties to conclude the new Nuclear Cooperation Agreement to ensure mutual economic benefit between the two countries.

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