

DECARBONIZING OUR ECONOMY:

Nuclear Energy Export Policy Priorities

Nuclear energy is a strategic industry, forming 100-year relationships with our partner nations. Competing and winning in the global marketplace isn't just a commercial victory—it is also a victory for U.S. standards for nuclear safety, nonproliferation and security.



As part of the plan to solve climate change and rebuild the economy, President Biden pledged to “leverage the carbon-pollution free energy provided by existing sources like nuclear” and make “far-reaching investments” in “critical clean energy technologies” including “advanced nuclear.” More than half of all carbon-free electricity in the U.S. comes from nuclear power. These reactors produce power around the clock, for up to 24 months between refuelings. This makes nuclear power reactors the ideal carbon-free, 24/7/365 partner to wind turbines, solar panels and energy storage in meeting the administration’s goal to decarbonize our electricity system by 2035.

Nuclear power makes sense for the U.S. to meet its energy needs. Countries around the world have reached the similar conclusion for their energy futures. U.S. technology can meet these needs. U.S. nuclear exports produce a powerful combination of advancing U.S. national security interests abroad while creating manufacturing jobs here at home.

Nuclear energy is a strategic industry, forming 100-year relationships with our partner nations. Competing and winning in the global marketplace isn't just a commercial victory—it is also a victory for U.S. standards for nuclear safety, nonproliferation and security. Today, the Chinese and the Russians dominate the global nuclear marketplace. For the past decade or more, Russia and China have pursued long-term strategies to develop a robust domestic nuclear program and to export nuclear technology through their state-owned companies. Nearly two-thirds of all nuclear power plants under construction use Chinese or Russian designs, strengthening their hands in Africa, Eastern Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

A recent report from UxC estimates U.S. exports of civil nuclear technology could total \$1.3 to \$1.9 trillion through 2050. A successful strategy to realize this market begins with action to preserve our domestic nuclear fleet to show our commitment to the technology. It is also complemented by demonstrating and commercializing new technologies that will provide state-of-the-art safety and reliability. Even with a strong domestic nuclear program, specific actions will be needed for government to work alongside industry to help U.S. firms compete against their state-owned rivals.

- **Ensure Federal Coordination**

Nuclear cooperation and subsequent commercial projects are often the product of government-to-government engagement at the highest levels. Federal efforts in close coordination with industry are critical to our collective success. Restoration of a nuclear energy policy director position within the Executive Office of the President is important step to ensuring this coordination and an appropriate focus on nuclear energy.

- **Boost Advocacy**

With the significant role of government-to-government engagement in nuclear commerce, it is critical that nuclear cooperation be part of the strategic engagement between the U.S. and our partners. Elevating nuclear engagement and advocacy in bilateral dialogues through intergovernmental agreements is critical.

- **Enhance Export Financing**

Financing is critical to U.S. nuclear competitiveness abroad. Continue to employ the Export-Import Bank, the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation and the U.S. Trade and Development Agency as key enablers of U.S. nuclear energy exports and work to modify policies and expand the support available through these agencies to enhance competitiveness.

- **Embrace Nuclear Energy as Clean Energy**

As the world pursues clean and sustainable energy, it is critical that nuclear energy have access to the same resources as other clean energy technologies. To that end, it is vital that the Biden-Harris administration work to ensure that nuclear energy is included in the development of international and multi-national standards for clean energy development. Specific examples include the EU's Taxonomy and Clean Energy Finance initiatives under the U.N.

- **Enable Market Access**

Unlike most other exports, nuclear energy exports require an intergovernmental framework agreement for nuclear cooperation. With the expansion of global markets, it is imperative that the State Department coordinate closely with the industry to ensure needed agreements are in place in anticipation of need. This will require adequate resources within State Department and other key agencies to negotiate and conclude such agreements.

- **Improve Export Control Efficiency**

Improve the speed and predictability of the Energy Department's export control licensing process by expanding general and fast-track authorizations for low-risk activities and by implementing bi-lateral mechanisms in key markets to facilitate export authorization.

