

## OPEN LETTER

To: The Prime Minister of Lithuania  
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Amsterdam, 28 September 2012

Dear Prime Minister,

**Subject: New nuclear power in the region**

Greenpeace, in cooperation with Lithuanian non-governmental organisations, will organise an “Ask the Expert” tour of the country on the subject of nuclear power that will precede the upcoming October 14<sup>th</sup> referendum on the issue.

We wish to express our strong concerns about the tone of the current debate in Lithuania, which is largely set by promoters of the Visaginas nuclear power project - and the politicians supporting it - and which attempts to dismiss any critical voices on nuclear power with accusations that they are agents of Russian interests.

Greenpeace opposes the construction of new nuclear power stations in Lithuania, but also in the Russian Kaliningrad enclave, in Belarus and Russia at large. Neither of these projects add to needs of the Baltic region in fighting global warming which is causing climate change and providing long-term affordable energy services and energy security.

Greenpeace opposes all nuclear development world-wide and actively campaigns for a sustainable global energy system based on ‘smart use’ of energy through efficiency measures and for the large scale uptake of safe renewable energy sources.

Specifically, a new nuclear reactor in Lithuania:

- Increases the chance on a larger nuclear accident – Lithuania has experienced at first-hand the effects of the Chernobyl catastrophe where thousands of your countrymen fought the impacts as liquidators. Last year's nuclear catastrophe at Fukushima has shown that unforeseen combinations of natural, human and technical factors can lead to similar accidents at any installation that contains large amounts of concentrated radioactive material. Fukushima has furthermore illustrated that Hitachi / GE guarantees that nothing could go wrong with to their reactors are not credible.
- Increases the price of electricity – The new nuclear projects in Finland and France, the abandoned project in Bulgaria, the cancelled plans in the US and elsewhere clearly demonstrate that the construction costs of new nuclear power stations have priced nuclear power out of the market. The European Commission has already warned Lithuania of this in its recent assessment of the Visaginas project.
- Increases the problems Lithuania is facing with the management of radioactive waste – There is currently no solution to this problem and attempts to reduce risks with expensive deep storage projects in the US, Finland, Sweden, France, Switzerland and Belgium are facing technological and managerial challenges. Lithuania already faces huge costs and technical challenges with the waste from the closed Ignalina nuclear power station. A new reactor would only increase both twofold.
- Increases Lithuania's energy insecurity by tying the country into the Russian electricity system – The large capacity of the reactor compared to the overall capacity of the Lithuanian grid would require back-up capacity in Russia. Although foreseen links with Poland and Sweden could ease that situation somewhat, it would not be sufficient to decrease the dependency on Russia for grid stability. Alternative, cheaper and cleaner policies based on more decentralised electricity generation in Lithuania – as described in the Energy [R]evolution Scenario from Greenpeace and the European Renewable Energy Council (EREC) – would, however, deliver more independence.

We call upon you to stimulate a more open and evidence-based public debate on nuclear power before the referendum so that Lithuanian citizens are able to make their minds up with all the facts at their disposal.

Greenpeace, and Lithuania's environmental organisations, will play our role in providing factual and evidence-based information to the population and we request that you use your influence to ensure that the pro-nuclear or "Yes"-camp does the same.

Yours sincerely,



**Dr. Kumi Naidoo**  
**Executive Director, Greenpeace International**



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