

**Closing Speech of Philippe Pradel,
Chairman of SNE-TP Governing Board,
1st General Assembly, 26th November 2008, Brussels**

Check against Delivery!

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is now time to conclude our General Assembly.

I hope that you have found this meeting informative – and an opportunity to meet fellow European researchers and scientists during the different breaks.

After one year of operation, the Platform has grown – from about 30 original organisations who drafted the Vision Report to the 67 organisations of today, from 19 European countries and representing all the stakeholders: industry of course, research and academia, technical safety organisations and non-governmental organisations.

We have put in place an organisational structure to carry out the first tasks of the Technology Platform, establishing the Strategic Research Agenda, the Deployment Strategy and the basis of a integrated Education, Training and Knowledge Management approach at the scale of Europe. The related documents will be finalised in the next few weeks and open for comments from the public at large. Concerning the Strategic Research Agenda, it was necessary to prioritize the research topics, and the different technologies for which road-maps have been established are those which industry is supporting and intent on deploying if research, development and demonstration is successful. It does not mean that other research topics are not to be pursued – for sure, Europe needs to keep an active R&D on long term research topics as well – but it should focus the bulk of its efforts on the SRA.

What are the next steps? How do we go about implementing the very ambitious Research Agenda that was presented to you?

- You have heard from the presentations by Bernd Guethoff that utilities are very keen on launching R&D projects related to the shorter term objectives. This is very good news and a strong signal that public/private partnerships in the area of fission research will play a key role in the

future. The structure of SNE-TP should be adapted to fund, launch and coordinate such projects in an efficient manner.

- For longer term objectives – the development of Gen IV fast neutron reactors, industry is increasingly showing signs of interest, and we also know that here, public support will be essential, whether at the level of Member States which are pursuing an active nuclear R&D programme, or at the level of the Community. The SET Plan offers a unique opportunity and framework for accelerating the development and demonstration of these technologies, the European Industrial Initiative. This will not only provide Europe with electricity-generating low carbon sustainable technologies, but with an industrial leadership at the world-wide level. SNE-TP will be very attentive to inform decision-makers about the challenges at stake in the area of fission technology so that fission remains high on the agenda of European Energy policy.
- I would also like to inform you that the SET Plan also offers an incentive for large research organisations grouped under the name “European Energy Research Alliance” to share their R&D programmes – this is called “joint programming”. Yesterday, at the Board meeting, there was a strong support to propose to the EERA one of our cross-cutting topic research – material for generation IV reactors. So we look forward to more integrated and long term research on this and probably other topics of research.

The round table session on funding for fission R&D was I believe very instructive. We see that there are many opportunities for gathering resources at member state level and EU level, many of which require political will – but also require from us the ability to coordinate research, development and demonstration programmes. The platform will launch next year a specific working group to identify each funding means and inform decision makers about these opportunities, for the benefit of the platform and its stakeholders.

So in conclusion, 2009 will be a very challenging year for us, which will test our capabilities to work together and implement the Strategic Research Agenda in the form of short term projects and more long term “joint” research programmes.

I would like to thank all of you for listening and participating to the discussions. I would like especially to thank the speakers today and our session chairpersons, and those who prepared the posters outside. The speeches and presentations will be on the website next week.

At our next General Assembly in 2010, for sure we will be able to inform you of R&D projects which the SNE-TP will have launched, whether in the frame of

the Euratom Framework Programme, or through public/private partnerships. We hope to report on the launch of the European Industrial Initiative for Generation IV Fast Neutron Reactor technologies.

In the shorter term, I invite you to attend the FISA 2009 conference which will take place in June 2009 in the Czech Republic, which will also be an opportunity for the SNE-TP Community to present its R&D strategy and projects funded by the Commission under the Euratom Framework Programme.

I thank you, and wish you a safe and pleasant trip back home.