



## **Ministers take a close look at nuclear energy**



*Nuclear energy was the focus of considerable attention in this spring's international agenda. At the international conference on Nuclear Power for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century held in Paris in March, 74 countries and 10 international organisations were represented. In May, nuclear energy was also debated at the Meeting of the International Energy Agency (IEA) Governing Board at Ministerial Level, the OECD Forum on Fuelling the Future: Security, Stability, Development, and at the Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level, held back-to-back with the OECD Forum.*

*At the Nuclear Power for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century conference, opinions about nuclear energy were largely, though not exclusively, positive. Many Delegates tended to consider that nuclear energy can, under the right conditions, be part of a response to the challenge of meeting expanding energy demand, ensuring the security of energy supply, while addressing climate change. An overview of the main themes covered during the conference is provided in the news brief on page 21.*

*In the other meetings, the focus was less on nuclear energy and more on energy issues all-around. At the OECD Forum, the general sentiment was that urgent action was required in the energy sectors of both developed and developing countries. Ministers at the Meeting of the IEA Governing Board at Ministerial Level stressed that energy security remained their core mission, and described their vision of energy security as greater global availability of reliable, affordable, clean energy. At the Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level, on 3-4 May, Ministers underlined that sufficient supply of clean and affordable energy is crucial for economic and social development. They further considered that investment in energy technology and infrastructure must*



*be directed towards sustainable, efficient technology with less negative climate impact. During a joint meeting held between the Delegates attending the Meeting of the OECD Council at Ministerial Level (MCM) and the Meeting of the IEA Governing Board at Ministerial Level, participants discussed how governments can improve the framework conditions to ensure timely investment in energy infrastructure that meets the tests of security of supply, economic efficiency, environmental sensitivity and affordability.*

*The messages from these high-level gatherings seem clear, and I firmly believe that we cannot afford to underestimate the importance of meeting the energy challenges before us. Our economies depend upon it, as do our health and well-being. Meeting growing energy demands must be done with due consideration for preserving the environment. To succeed, a full range of approaches – starting with energy conservation measures, but also including cleaner energy sources, greater use of renewables and appropriate environmental-preservation agreements and incentives – will be necessary.*

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