The Outlook for Nuclear Energy

Adnan A. Shihab-Eldin

Edited Version of a Presentation made at the

41st Oxford Energy Seminar

20 September 2019

Oxford, UK (EU)

Provided as background information for the 23 July 2020 Seminar:

"Outlook for Nuclear Power in a Carbon Constrained World"



Outline



- Development of Nuclear Power prior to Fukushima
- Nuclear Power Post Fukushima: Status and Uncertain Outlook
- Challenges to a Robust Future Role of Nuclear Power:
- Will SMR Offer Brighter Future for Nuclear Energy
- Nuclear Fusion: The ultimate solution?



History & Development of Nuclear Power

- Early optimism: "Too cheap to meter" (1953 USAEC)
- Soon, faced reality of a massive & complex industry
- It endured impact of a couple of major accidents
- Attempted Renaissance aborted each time

Development of Nuclear Power prior to Fukushima



1953: "too cheap to meter", USAEC Chair

- Rising interest post 73
- Increasing const. delays, High inflation, and cost over-runs
- TMI 79
- Chernobyl 86
- Renewed interest post 2003:
 - Higher capacity factor; License extensions; Market in used reactor; money printing machines

• A Renaissance









Drivers of Revived Interest in Nuclear Power Prior to Fukushima (between 2003 & end of 2010)



• <u>Economics</u> Competitiveness:

Competed favorably with most other available base load power generation systems.

Low carbon base load power option

- readily available to meet Climate Change challenge.
- High level of Fuel Security for dispatchable Generation
 - Fuel load for several years can be stored easily at little cost.
- Good (relative) Safety Record, despite TMI and Chernobyl accidents
 - Lingering questions/concerns remained of risks from future accidents at NPPs & NFC facilities (particularly the lack of verifiable & proven safe permanent waste disposal !!??
- Then Fukushima !!







Frequency-Consequence Curves for Severe Accidents in Various Energy Chains (OECD: 1969-2001)



Fatal cancers from Chernobyl in next 60 years (calculated) 7,500 in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine & 20,000 – 30,000 worldwide (compared to 300 millions natural causes (@ 20% of total death) – This controversial / UNLIKELY – assumes LNT

The Fukushima Shock: What happened & why (11.03.2011)



- @ 14:46 Earthquake of Magnitude 9 (acceleration at site close to design); all reactors (1,2 &3) automatically shutdown!
- @15:45 Tsunami wave height at site: 14 M!!!; (Design: 5.7 M, DG & Reactor at 10 -13 m. → Historical record > 20 M!)
- Flooded station (D/G) → Station Blackout (SBO)
- → loss of coolant → loss of decay heat removal
- → Core-melt → release of radioactivity & H from reactor vessel with steam being vented
- → H explosions in 3 reactors (above 4% concentration)
- → some radioactive release to atmosphere and sea (¹³¹I and) ¹³⁷Cs ~ ½ of Chernobyl total release)
- Stabilization (Cold shutdown) took months !!!
- Mitigation on & off site: control & disposal of contaminated water, damaged SF, remediation of site, define exclusion zones, evacuation, rehabilitation, exposure control, health impacts & regaining confidence,
- Full Story so far: <u>The IAEA 2015 report</u>



Source: WHO, 2013); WHO Chernobyl 2016 update:;UNSCAR 2014 <u>http://www.unscear.org/</u>,, UNESCAR 2016 white paper:; IAEA DG report on Fukushima Daiichi Accident, GC/59, 2015;

Health impact of Fukushima: WHO, UNESCAR & IAEA Assessment of risk to public from exposure to radiation from released radioactivity

WHO 2013 Report

- For general population inside & outside Japan, predicted risks are low & no observable increases in cancer rates above baseline are anticipated.
- "however, estimated risk for specific cancers in certain subsets of the population in Fukushima Prefecture has increased;
- it calls for long term continued monitoring and health screening for those people

UNESCAR 2014 Report & 2016 WP

- "No discernable increases in radiation related health effects are expected among members of public or their descendent"
- "The most important health effect is on social and well being related to the impact of the earthquake, tsunami & fear related to perceived risk of radiation"

The IAEA Encyclopedic report (2015), & updates

2018 Update:

- There were no acute radiation injuries or deaths among the workers or the public due to exposure to radiation
 resulting from FDNPS accident; Considering the level of estimated doses, the lifetime radiation-induced cancer risks
 other than thyroid are small and much smaller than the lifetime baseline cancer risks.
- Regarding the risk of thyroid cancer in exposed infants and children, the level of risk is uncertain since it is difficult to verify thyroid dose estimates by direct measurements of radiation exposure.





Lesson Learned

like Chernobyl, Profoundly Man made

Response varied

from political, to prudently cautious (Stress Tests), wait & see

- "In 2006 Japan revised standards for seismic resistance. ... TEPCO needed to implement reinforcement. ...could not exclude ...Earthquake damaged critical reactor components.."
- "NISA and TEPCO were aware of the need to improve safety before 2011
- "The accident was a profoundly man made disaster that could and should have been foreseen and prevented"
- "Its fundamental causes are to be found in the ingrained conventions of Japanese Culture"

- Initial impact of responses was mixed; But Renaissance stalled & combined with other factors, Nuclear Power is no longer a viable option in most OECD
- Decisions by few OECD countries has a powerful multiplier effect; impact will last for at least another decade.
- Germany's Energywende: succeeded in increasing installed renewable capacity : from 11.4 → 112 GW (2002-2019)
- but at what cost? <u>enormous</u>
 <u>overcapacity</u>: 215 GW (Max. Consumption ~ 83 GW)



Uncertain growth outlook for Nuclear Power: Revival, then post Fukushima Brown-out

The role of nuclear energy, in the world's energy transition? Is it still indispensable as part of response to climate change?

If as Paris Agreement aims to keep rise in T below 1.5, Then most likely: Yes

Is it likely to play an important role by 2050? Not clear! but likely-to-may-be, but must overcome major obstacles/challenges



Nuclear Power Today

Nuclear Power Status 2018



Reactors under construction 56643 MW(e) total net capacity 55 Nuclear power reactors

Operating experience 17 881 Reactor-years of operation



Status changes



Data are as reported - 30 June 2019

awan, China: 5 reactors, 4 448 MW(e) in operation; 2 reactors, 2 600 MW(e) under construction; 26.7 TWh electricity supplied, 11.4% nuclear share

www.iaea.org/pris



Construction starts 1950 to 2019



As per 17 September 2019 Source: H.H. Holger, Adapted from IAEA - PRIS



Incremental nuclear power capacity additions (GWe) and nuclear electricity generation (TWh)



Construction starts & grid connections





As per 17 September 2019 Source: H.H. Holger, Adapted from IAEA - PRIS



Development of regional nuclear generating capacities



As per 17 September 2019 Source: H.H. Holger, Adapted from IAEA - PRIS



Country specific nuclear shares in electricity generation, 2018





Historical development of the global electricity generating mix and the share of nuclear power



1960+, Growth, 1979+ first brown-out, 2002+ revival, 2011+ another brownout, current fading in OECD) with new built mainly in China, Asia & developing countries



Status global nuclear power

Units in Operation: 450 399.7 GWe



Units under construction: 52 52.7 GWe



Number of Power Reactors by Country and Status



KFAS

Industry Trends over last 10 years -



Trend of First Grid Connections

- Trends of First Connection
- Trends of Construction Starts
- Trends of Permeant Shutdowns

NOT A ROBUST INDUSTRY



2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 Years Trend of Construction Starts Number of Reactors 20 15 10 5

2014

Years

2015

2016

2017

2018

2019

0

2010

2011

2012

2013





Newcomers to nuclear power

Cumulative number of countries' first grid connection



Sources: H.H. Holger, adopted from IEA, IAEA, WNA, 2018

Nuclear power today

NIW Projections for Reactor Newbuild Projects by 2030



See page 4 for map key

KFAS



Outlook for Nuclear Power (post Fukushima brown-out)

covering periods 2030 through 2050

Includes changes of IAEA's High & Low Projections (2011-2019)



Global nuclear power projections (IEA, IAEA, WNA



Sources: IEA, IAEA, WNA



IAEA – 2019 global nuclear capacity outlook HIGH projection





IAEA – 2019 global nuclear capacity outlook LOW projection





Electrical generating capacity, by region, GWe



- SE Asia/Oceania
- Western Asia
- Southern Asia
- Central & Eastern Asia
- Estern Europe
- Africa
- Latin America
- North America
- Europe

What lies behind the huge differences between low and high projections?



- Increasing challenges facing newly built NPPs, from:
- Economic competitiveness of NP is being challenged from:
 - alternative power technologies, mainly from Renewable with rapidly falling prices, helped by favorable environment of incentives/subsidy policies, & low Gas & Coal prices, specially in OECD
 - excessive cost overruns due to regulation, GIII+ FOAK construction delays
 - Almost impossible for private business to consider new NPP projects without strong Government support, which is non existent in almost all OECD (few exceptions like UK)
- Three S-Challenges/concerns remain strong head wind against expansion of Nuclear Power (In particular for new countries):
 - Safety: to minimize the risk of release of radioactivity from operations, accidents of NFC
 - Security; to protect and secure radioactive material and NFC facilities
 - Safeguards, (Non-proliferation): from diverting technology and material to military purpose
- The 3-S challenges are interconnected & impact economic competitiveness;
 Often Safety and Security are discussed and used interchangeably

Safety of current generation of NPP

- How likely is a large core-damage accident?
 - Core-damage frequency (CDF): a few x 10⁻⁵ / year
 - Probability of a large release: a few percent of CDF ≈ 10⁻⁶ / year
- What limits the core-damage frequency to a few x 10⁻ ⁵/year?
- Can we do better? How?

What could cause a given NPP to fail to achieve these safety levels?

Weak Safety Culture

- <u> 1979: Three Mile Island (US)</u>
 - Poor operator training
 - Insufficient sharing of information and learning from experience
- <u> 1986: Chernobyl (USSR)</u>
 - Top-down management created an atmosphere where a questioning attitude brought punishment
 - A weak regulatory agency analysis not required before performing an off-normal experiment
- 2011: Fukushima (Japan)
 - Inability of safety concerns to be acted upon at higher levels within the operating company
 - Government interference with nuclear operations
 - A weak regulatory agency deferred to the operating company



The Drivers of Nuclear Power Safety



- Three MAIN drivers for a Nuclear Safety Centre
 - 1. Safety culture at all levels and for all stakeholders (no exemptions)
 - 2. An international nuclear safety regime which needs further strengthening (international regulator) :Examples from other fields:
 - Civil Aviation: the ICAO Template
 - Climate Change Template (from UNFCCC to Paris Climate Agreement
 - 1. Better appreciation of, and response to, the perception of risks among the public & decision makers

These drivers - if not strengthened & improved, will constrain prospects of NP

- Nuclear safety concerns, & cost, continue to impede political & public acceptance of NP
- Risks from potentially catastrophic accidents cannot be dealt with probabilistically in isolation nor equated to natural catastrophic events with similar risk magnitude
- Comparative risk/benefits assessments of different generating options covering all externalities
- Technology innovation necessary but insufficient
- Perceptions matter (cannot be changed by stating technical facts or education
 - Including perceptions about HLW and spent fuel management

Future expansion into "newcomer" countries: Concerns & Prerequisites



- Safety culture is the major concern !
 - (... and this includes security and non-proliferation concerns too!)
- **Prerequisites:** For nuclear power to be deployed successfully in countries without a current commercial nuclear program, several cultural attributes must be present.:
 - A political culture that can make a long-term commitment,
 - provide for an independent regulatory agency with both authority & resources
 - Equally crucial are a set of social-culture issues including:
 - freedom from corruption, holding safety as paramount, a commitment to transparency in management practices and communication, and a strong continuity of institutions.
 - Public Acceptance
- Without these, a nuclear-power program is less likely to achieve an adequate safety record
- Should monitor NP development in new comer countries over 1-2 decades, UAE, Turkey,

Long Term Disposal of SF & HLW:



Nuclear power is the only large-scale energy-producing technology that is required To takes fullresponsibility for all its waste and fully costs this into the product.

- Most nuclear utilities are required by governments to put aside a levy (e.g. 0.1 cents per kilowatt hour in the USA, 0.14 ¢/kWh in France) to provide for the management and disposal of their waste
- The current & future size of the problem of HLW & SF
- Interim & Final solutions
- Disposal for x000 years in underground repositories, retrievable and terminal
- Extensive RDD and technical solutions are feasible but NIMBY!
- Finland, Sweden & France most advanced with construction license submitted (granted in 2015 in FIN)



Recent developments I (WNI, WNA, IAEA



OECD countries: Nuclear power continues to face problems on:

- Economic grounds
 - High upfront investments in mostly liberalized markets
 - Poor track record regarding on time and on budget construction completion
 - Massive reduction in cost of Re and continued supporting policy incentives
 - Costs of system integration of intermittent renewables externalized
 - Cheap natural gas (LNG) & shale gas in North America
 - No compensation for nuclear 24/7 capacity availability
 - No recognition of nuclear climate and other environmental benefits
 - Low growth or stagnating electricity demand

• Rising public opposition & politics in the aftermath of FDNP accident,

- remaining concerns about safety of NP & lack of demonstrable progress on HLW Disposal acceptable solutions ==> affecting prospects of NP
- ROK is latest country to announce a nuclear cap/phase-out following Germany, Switzerland, etc.
- Other countries (e.g., France, Sweden) cap directly or indirectly market share of nuclear power
- Phase-out politics frustrate NPP staff and potentially could affect nuclear operating safety
- Knowledge depreciation
- Only UK, Poland, Chec, France, Finland, few others remain viable for now

Recent developments II (WNI, WNA, IAEA, ...



Non-OECD Countries

- Prospects remain relatively bright in Asia and newcomer countries
 - In addition to China, India, Pakistan, Russian Federation, several Latin American, African and Middle Eastern Countries (e.g. UAE, KSA, Iran, Egypt, Turkey)
- Nonetheless, public apprehension and signs of organized opposition is also becoming visible and rising in developing economies (within ongoing programs and new comers) – Future of NP dependent on China & India, and Russia
- Waste: World 1st permanent HLW Waste repository received construction permit! (FIN), Good step but Jury will take a long time, as we need more examples of such technology solutions

Would Climate change challenge bring renewed interest in Nuclear Power, in particular small modular reactors (SMRs) – the new lease on life for nuclear power! For now "All Renewable" overshadowing potential roles of Nuclear & Decarbonized O&G



Will SMRs save the day?

Drivers & Expected Advantages

Driving Forces for SMRs











Flexibility of Utilization



Images courtesy of US-DOE, NuScale, KAERI, CNEA, mPower & CNNC

Key expected advantages





Economic

- Lower Upfront capital cost
- Economy of serial production



Modularization

- Multi-module
- Modular Construction



Flexible Application

- Remote regions
- Small grids



Smaller footprint

 Reduced Emergency planning zone



Replacement for aging fossil-fired plants

Better Affordability

Shorter construction time

Wider range of Users

Site flexibility

Reduced CO₂ production

Integration with Renewables



Potential Hybrid Energy System

Map of Global SMR Technology Development



AEA

About 40 SMR design teams world-wide

SMRs Under Construction Now



- About 40 SMR design teams • world-wide working on:
 - **Evolutionary**
 - **Revolutionary**
- **Under Construction Now**
 - **Argentina:**
 - 27 MWe integral PWR ۰
 - **China**
 - 105 MWe pebble bed high temperature gas reactor
 - Russia
 - 70 MWe integral PWR (ship)
 - **50 MWe integral PWR** (icebreaker)

Design Types for immediate & Near ۲ **Term Deployment**

SMRs for immediate & near term deployment Samples for land-based SMRs Water cooled SMRs Gas cooled SMRs **ISE desalination**

CAREM HTR-PM SMART

ACP100

NuScale



EM²

Liquid metal cooled SMRs



SMRs Estimated Timeline of Deployment

60 Years



Power Range of SMRs





Reactor Designs

Concluding Remarks



- Nuclear Power continues to face challenges (3S); very likely to continue slow growth— @ significantly reduced rate for next 10 years at leas; Mostly outside OECD – in Asia
- NP is complex technology. NO technology is w/o risks, but without new approach, it will be difficult to convince public to accept relative benefits far outweigh perceived risk;
- Phasing out NP in OECD is political GAMBIT!; It may be a mistake, but OECD can afford it
- Dim outlook in OECD, with head wind from euphoric-support embracing all Re electricity
- For NP to make a major contribution to mitigation of climate change and meeting SD goal 7, it must overcome rising aversion to NP:
 - prove economic competitiveness of some G III+, G-IV & SMR, under market, & local environments
 - demonstrate practical solutions to HLW disposal (Finland, Sweden, France,..)
 - strengthen nuclear safety, all levels, including culture and the international safety regime,
 - develop effective strategies to improve public and decision makers' understanding of benefits vs. perception of associated risks,
 - Resolve the obstacles to full implementation of NPT, including start of disarmament of all NWS, INFCCs..
- G-IV, SMR (Revolutionary) nuclear technologies offer a possible path for bright future
- Would nuclear fusion finally turn the corner, with ITER? In 2 decades?