



31 March 2009 / **News N° 33**

## **Hungary's Parliament Paves Way To Build New Reactor Unit**

**31 Mar (NucNet): Hungary's parliament has approved a decision-in-principle that paves the way for construction of a new reactor unit at the country's Paks nuclear power plant.**

Lawmakers gave their approval last night. There were 330 votes in favour, six against and 10 abstentions.

According to an explanation set out in the resolution approved by lawmakers, preparations towards making the investment in the new unit will take at least five years to complete.

The commissioning, planning and implementation of the construction project is expected to take a minimum of six years. Therefore the overall period leading to construction will be at least 11 years.

The explanation in the resolution stated that some 73 percent of Hungarians support nuclear power generation in the country.

Parliamentary approval was required before any discussions could begin on specific issues such as the reactor design. However, Hungary's prime minister Ferenc Gyurcsany said recently that, in his opinion, about 2,000 megawatts of new nuclear generating capacity was needed at the Paks site. He suggested this could be a single 1,600 MW or so unit, or two 1,000 MW units.

Experts will now review potential reactor designs and consider other aspects of construction, such as environmental and economic issues, before a final decision is taken to build.

Paks comprises four VVER-440 units which entered commercial operation between 1983 and 1987.

– by John Shepherd

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