



## 8. **NATIONS: Despite Japan's nuclear disaster, Vietnam confirms plans to build reactor** (03/22/2011)

Officials in Vietnam have announced that they will continue to work on building a nuclear reactor to satisfy the country's future energy needs.

"Viet Nam puts nuclear safety-related issues [as] a top priority. This is particularly important in the context of climate change and natural disasters, particularly the earthquake and tsunami [that] just happened in Japan," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said in a statement published on the department's website.

Vietnam plans to have eight operational reactors by 2030, with the aid of Japan and Russia.

Vietnam's decision to go ahead with its atomic plans differs from the actions of the rest of the world. In the past week, the United States, Switzerland and Germany have announced plans to review existing plants, with Germany taking some older plants offline.

Although Vietnam is not susceptible to earthquakes, it is extremely prone to tropical storms and hurricanes and is likely to be one of the countries most affected by climate change. Sea level rise is a serious concern and could have a drastic effect on nuclear reactors built in affected areas.

Vuong Huu Tan, head of the Vietnamese government's Nuclear Energy Institute, said that climate-related concerns have been taken into account. Energy shortages, evident by frequent blackouts in the country, are considered a major impediment to economic development, he added.

"By 2020, Vietnam will run out of current resources for energy. So we are looking at nuclear power as an alternative, but not the sole supply of energy. We want to have diverse sources of power, so we are also looking at solar, wind and other sources of energy," said Vuong Huu Tan.

The country decided to adopt nuclear power in the mid-1990s, and the decision was endorsed by the National Assembly at the 9th Party Congress 10 years ago (Helen Clark, [GlobalPost](#), Mar. 20). -- TS

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