

Slovenia's plans for the construction of a new units at its sole nuclear power plant Krsko drew harsh opposition from neighboring Austria, whose Constitution bans the use of nuclear fission for electricity generation.

According to media reports, Austrian Environment Minister Leonore Gewessler said that the country had major concerns about the project and has asked for an assessment of the earthquake risk at the site by international experts.

Minister Gewessler stressed that the extension of the operational life on the existing unit and the planned construction of a new one represent a risk or the people of Austria, adding that she has already communicated these concerns to her Slovenian colleague and expects them to be taken seriously.

Earlier this week, Slovenian Ministry of Infrastructure has issued an energy permit for the construction of the second unit at nuclear power plant Krsko, a step that allows permitting procedures to begin and comes a week after the national climate strategy enshrined nuclear as a long-term energy option. The project will be managed by the state-owned Gen Energija. The plan is to build a 1.1 GW unit with an estimated production of 9,000 GWh of electricity per year and a life span of 60 years.

NPP Krsko, located on the border with Croatia, some 100 kilometers from Austria, provides about 40 % of Slovenia's electricity.