Nigeria: Senate Calls for Inclusion of Nuclear in Energy Mix

What Happened: The Senate of Nigeria passed a resolution that called on the government, under President Buhari, to consider including nuclear power in the country’s energy mix. On November 21, World Nuclear News reported that the Senate asked the government to give the Nigerian Atomic Energy Commission a mandate for talks with nuclear reactor vendors on time.

Why It Matters: Following the creation of the Nigerian Atomic Energy Commission in 1976, various governments sought to create an environment to facilitate the introduction of the country’s first nuclear power reactor as part of a broader effort toward industrialization, shared prosperity, and poverty eradication. However, several factors, including funding allocation, legal framework, and public support, have hindered the efforts. The Senate’s opinion presents an opportunity to rally executive-level political buy-in and rally public support necessary to advance the nuclear power program.

Background: Russia’s Rosatom and Nigeria Atomic Energy Commission initiated a partnership in 2009 by executing an intergovernmental agreement on cooperation in the field of the peaceful usage of nuclear technologies. Both parties signed agreements in 2016 and 2017 to set up four nuclear power plants and after a decade of developing the framework, a Centre for Nuclear Science and Technology. The nuclear project was estimated to cost about US $20 billion and produce 4,800 megawatts of electricity by 2035. According to the agreements, Russia will build, own, and operate the plants in Nigeria for several decades before transferring ownership of the plants to Nigeria.