

Attn: Ursula von der Leyen
President of the European Commission

March 5th, 2022
Kyiv

Dear Ms. President,

On March 2, 2022, the UN General Assembly adopted a resolution on the aggression against Ukraine, which recognized and condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine with a demand to immediately withdraw troops from the Ukrainian territory. However, the Russian Federation continues to carry out full-scale military actions across the country using significant infantry forces, heavy weaponry, aircraft, artillery, and maritime transport. Having crossed the borders of our state, the Russian Federation attacked the border areas from the north, east and south striking at critical infrastructure, municipalities, including the infrastructure of peaceful cities, towns, and villages. As a result of the massive attacks, not only servicemen are killed but also civilians, children, and elderly. Households, kindergartens, cinemas, and healthcare facilities are being wiped out and destroyed.

With all dignity, the Ukrainian military and territorial defence forces withstand the attacks of one of the world's strongest armies. The civilians heroically defend their territories trying not let the invader occupy their settlements. Very often life is the price of this courage. This critical situation is exactly what happened in the town of Enerhodar, which is home to the largest nuclear power plant in Europe and the sixth largest nuclear power plant in the world – Zaporizhzhya NPP comprised of 6 power units.

The Ministry of Energy of Ukraine (MEU) along with the State Enterprise “National Nuclear Energy Generating Company “Energoatom” (Energoatom) and the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine (SNRIU) continue to perform their functions under martial law in accordance with the legislation of Ukraine and the international regulatory framework on nuclear and radiation safety.

There is a constant 24/7 information exchange between the MEU and Energoatom and SNRIU, which keeps informing the IAEA about developments through the USIE IAEA website accessible to the member-states. Under conditions of war, Russian and pro-Russian media together with their official sources spread a lot of fake and untrustworthy information, including about nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

Information on developments across Ukraine is updated daily and published in the IAEA USIE's secure international communication system (15 reports have been published to date). In addition, replies to all telephone and e-mail requests from the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre and from the regulators of other countries and international organizations are provided.

On March 1, 2022 – 11:40 am – the telecommunication network of Zaporizhzhya NPP was damaged after Russian missile strikes. Hence, the possibility of transmitting radiation monitoring data to the International Radiation Monitoring Information System (IRMIS) was lost, of which the IAEA has been notified. Repairs and recovery are complexified by hostilities near ZNPP.

On March 3, 2022, the Russian troops with almost 100 units of heavy military assets (tanks) and a large number of infantry troops broke through the checkpoint to the city of Enerhodar (3 km from the ZNPP site).

Russian infantry troops were moving directly through the fields around the city towards the ZNPP site. There was a fight inside Enerhodar and on the road to the ZNPP site. On the night of March 4, 2022 – at 01:40 am Kyiv time – the Russian military forces inflicted shelling of the Zaporizhzhya NPP site. As a result, fires broke out in the ZNPP area. This was again urgently reported through the USIE of the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre.

As a result of the hostilities:

- At Unit 1, the main building and the special building's overpass were damaged.
- Telecommunication line is broken and currently unavailable.
- Zaporizhzhya NPP site was seized by the Russian armed forces.
- The rotation of NPP operational staff took place more than a day later. Operational staff works at their workplaces under pressure from the armed forces of Russian Federation, which had previously carried out brutal hostilities in residential areas of Energodar. At these circumstances the staff has to keep monitoring of the power units and ensure their operation in accordance with the safety requirements.
- Zaporizhzhya NPP's Automated Radiation Monitoring System does not produce any data.
- Cooling of nuclear fuel at Zaporizhzhya NPP power units is ensured by design systems in accordance with the requirements of safe operation procedures. Losing the possibility to cool nuclear fuel would lead to significant radioactive emissions into the environment. As a result, such a disaster may outweigh all the previous accidents at nuclear power plants ever recorded, including the ones in at Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi NPPs.
- Russian shells fell in the area of the spent nuclear fuel storage facility, which is located on the Zaporizhzhya NPP site. In case this hazardous facility is damaged by strikes, this will also lead to major radioactive release.
- The nuclear safety inspectors of the SNRIU are not allowed to have access to the Zaporizhzhya NPP site due to the Russian troops deployed in the area.

The current state of the power units:

- Unit 1 is in outage.
- Units 2 and 4 are in operation.
- Units 3, 5 and 6 were transferred to the safest state "cold shut-down" (due to the military attacks).

The nuclear installation with Subcritical Assembly Neutron Source (the neutron source based on subcritical assembly controlled by a linear electron accelerator) in Kharkiv's Institute of Physics and Technology (the National R&D Centre) has been switched to a deep subcritical state and remains under control. However in the situation when Kharkiv suffers from Russian massive military attacks any facility located in the city can not be consider safe. As well as oncology dispensary which came under fire and was destroyed. There are a number of high level radiation sources the safety of which could be compromised.

On March 3, 2022, due to the bombing of the Kharkiv city by Russian troops, the office of the Kharkiv branch of the State Scientific and Technical Center for Nuclear and Radiation Safety was completely destroyed.

On February 24, 2022, the entire exclusion zone and all the Chernobyl NPP facilities were seized by armed troops without insignia, including:

- Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage Facilities – ISF-1 and ISF-2.
- New safe confinement of Shelter object.

- Units 1, 2 and 3 at the decommissioning stage.
- Radioactive waste management facilities at ChNPP.
- Military unit 3041, which had guarded the ChNPP, was disarmed and taken as hostages.

On March 2, 2022 – 10:29 pm – there was an emergency shutdown of the 330 Lisova High-Voltage Line. Auto-reclosing failed. Due to the ‘takeover’ of the Chornobyl nuclear power plant, scheduled maintenance and repair works of the critical safety equipment are restricted.

Unfortunately, today the situation with the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant remains unchanged, and we want to stress this again – since February 24, 2022. The operating staff are physically exhausted and mentally drained and being in danger has to operate and maintain the safety of the nuclear facilities on site.

In addition, it should be noted that as heavy weapons of the Russian Federation were advancing and taking forbidden routes through the Exclusion zone of the Chornobyl NPP, a layer of contaminated soil and dust got off the ground and thus caused deteriorating radiological situation across the exclusion zone. This had been recorded by the Automated Radiation Monitoring System before the System went out the operation.

Military operations of the Russian Armed Forces and the actual takeover of the nuclear power facilities in Ukraine are accompanied by failures of the radiation monitoring equipment limiting the ability of nuclear installation operators to perform maintenance and repair works around the safety-critical systems (SCS), loss of communication and power supply channels, as well as emergency risks without timely response possibility due to the destroyed infrastructure and no access for specialized personnel. There are difficulties with spare part supplies for maintenance and repairs of the SCS, as well as with the engagement of contractors to perform maintenance and modernization.

Ukraine calls on our international partners to do everything possible to prevent a global-scale nuclear disaster.

We call for urgent, effective, and decisive action by the UN, EU, OSCE, and IAEA to prevent an environmental catastrophe.

In this regard, we insist on the special EU mission to ensure safety of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, including Chornobyl NPP (Pripyat), Zaporizhzhya NPP (Enerhodar), South-Ukraine NPP (Yuzhnoukrainsk), Rivne NPP (Varash) and Khmelnytsky NPP (Netishyn). This mission should also include fact finding and documentation of all criminal acts of the Russian military forces for future international court proceedings.

Sincerely yours,

Minister of Energy of Ukraine



German GALUSHCHENKO

Acting President of
SE NNEGC Energoatom



Petro KOTIN

Acting Chairman – Chief State
Inspector of SNRIU



Oleh KORIKOV