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## **URGENT**

### **To Whom It May Concern**

On February 24, 2022 Russia launched a new phase of **military invasion** in Ukraine. Russia's full-scale war on the European continent has become **the first major challenge** since World War II posing a **threat** to not only European security system but also to the international one. Abstracting from the geopolitical, military and security contexts of current events, which definitely is the **subject of profound analysis** by competent institutions, analysts and experts, the threat to European and international security is related, inter alia, to **nuclear and radiation factors**.

By this open letter, **WiN Ukraine**, a national chapter of *WiN Global*, would like to appeal to the international nuclear community to draw its attention to the Russian Federation's **crimes against radiation and nuclear safety and security**, to urge to strongly condemn it and resort to effective measures **to prevent** potential nuclear or radiation disaster(s) in Europe.

On February 24, the Russian Federation occupied the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone having established control over the Chornobyl nuclear power plant facilities and radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel disposal sites. For more than three weeks now, the ChNPP personnel, without any rotation, **are being held hostage** by the Russian military. Being under moral and mental duress, they are deprived of the opportunity to fully perform routine maintenance that poses a significant **threat** to Chornobyl nuclear facilities. There is a known case of damaging power supply to the ChNPP by Russian forces that poses a risk of spent nuclear fuel leakage into the environment. In addition, since the beginning of the Exclusion Zone occupation, there has been an increase in the background radiation because of the movement of the Russian heavy equipment and its deployment in the Zone to avoid fire from the Armed Forces of Ukraine.

On February 27, it was reported about **a shell hit from Russian troops** at a radioactive waste storage facility of the State Special Enterprise Radon Association.

On March 4, the Russian Federation seized the territory of Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, the largest nuclear power plant in Europe, operated by six power units generating 6,000 MW. Before the Russian military gained the ZNPP territory, they **had destroyed a training center and damaged the first power unit by shelling**. On March 10, for the second time, Russian armed forces **attacked** Kharkiv Institute of Physics and Technology where an experimental reactor is located. It should also be emphasized that

attacks on hazardous nuclear facilities are accompanied by **shelling of residential areas and civilian infrastructure** resulting in significant casualties among the Ukrainian people and **humanitarian catastrophes** such as in Mariupol, Kharkiv, Iziium, Chernihiv, Ivankiv, Volnovakha and satellite cities of Kyiv. This is a **grave violation** of the rules and customs of warfare and international law itself.

The aforementioned Russian combatants' actions in terms of nuclear and radiation facilities fall fully under the **definition of nuclear terrorism** as stipulated in the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism adjusted for that fact that this is a deliberate tactic by Russia's political and military authorities. Moreover, this is confirmed by **Putin's statement** on February 27 with a direct threat to alert strategic deterrent forces. Against this background, the presence of ROSATOM employees at ZNPP, namely Oleg Romanenko, chief engineer at the Balakovo NPP, and Ivan Malakhov, deputy chief engineer for repairs at Rostov NPP, is also of serious concern. In this regard, **we call on the Russian nuclear community** to reaffirm its **commitment to nuclear and radiation safety and security principles**, as well as to the moral and ethical principles of professional conduct by ending participation in these acts of state nuclear terrorism and its decisive condemnation. Furthermore, **we urge the Russian nuclear community to influence its political leadership** to prevent the seizure of nuclear sites on Ukrainian territory and hostilities around such sites, including civilian infrastructure supporting them, for instance, power grids. Otherwise, **it could have gravest consequences of the nuclear or radiation catastrophe** and apparent mutual obliteration if this spiral of silence continues to unravel.

Russia's decision to ignore the order of the UN International Court of Justice to immediately withdraw its troops from Ukraine combined with its refusal to abide by the Council of Europe values resulting in Russia's expulsion from this organization and its further threat to denounce the European Convention on Human Rights are just the latest examples of how the Russian Federation defies international law infrastructure. This Russian leadership's modus operandi is driven by the lack of a harsh response to previous violations by Russia, including in the field of nuclear safety and security. In particular, the international community failed to properly respond to the termination of safeguards and the transfer of nuclear materials that was under Ukraine's safeguards and ended up in the occupied territories of the Crimean Peninsula and Donbas in 2014.

Given this, addressing the world community on behalf of our State, we, the women of Ukrainian nuclear industry, **call for the immediate consolidation** of political, diplomatic and international lawful **efforts to cease hostilities** and shelling civilians and infrastructure. We demand **implicit withdrawal of all Russian troops from Ukraine** and **returning of seized nuclear facilities under the control of Ukraine** in order to ensure their **compliance with IAEA safeguards** and remove conditions and preconditions for nuclear terrorism by both the Russian state and criminal groups that may take advantage of the destabilized situation. We ask the international community

truthfully and faithfully report on events in Ukraine and do not disseminate Russian narratives and casuistry of the war.

Along with that, we ask the international community **to take into account appeals** formulated in the *Joint Statement of the Minister of Energy of Ukraine, Acting Head of the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine and Acting President of SE NNEGC Energoatom; the letter from Greenpeace International Executive Director Norma Torres and the open letter from Nikolai Steinberg to IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi etc.* Taking decisive action with regard to articulated calls to action could help **to avoid the nuclear catastrophe and restore peace in Europe and the world.**

*With hope for atom for peace, development and safe future.*

*On behalf of women of the entire nuclear industry of Ukraine.*

*Respectfully,*

**President**

**Vice President**



**Margaryta RAYETS**

**Anastasiia NECHYTAILO**