

Statement on the safety of nuclear installations in Ukraine following the military aggression by Russia

6th March 2022

On 06 March 2022, ENSREG held a second extraordinary meeting via videoconference with the participation of the IAEA, WENRA and the Ukrainian nuclear regulator (SNRIU) and two other observers (Switzerland, United Kingdom) to follow up on the first extraordinary meeting of 27 February 2022 and to further assess the situation with regard to nuclear safety in Ukraine in relation to the Russian Federation's continued and unjustified military aggression against Ukraine. The meeting specifically reviewed the implications of the military attack against Europe's largest nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhya.

ENSREG deplores the attacks by the Russian forces on the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant on 4 March 2022 and on the Kharkiv Nuclear Sub-Critical Installation "Neutron Source" on 6 March 2022. Such acts are absolutely unacceptable and we condemn them in the strongest possible terms, given the potential serious consequences of any violent attack at nuclear facilities.

Based on the reports from the IAEA, we note that the situation on the Zaporizhzhya site, including the fire at the training centre, has been brought under control. It is extremely disconcerting, however, that, as result of the military aggression against the plant, damage has been reported to have occurred to unit 1 building, the gallery and grid infrastructure. We call on the military forces to immediately leave the site so that the operator can ensure the safe operation of the plant and perform a full assessment of the damage, allow for reinstatement of the supply chain and repair of damage.

We reiterate our urgent call, in line with our previous statement of 27 February 2022 and IAEA Board of Governor's Resolution GOC/2022/17 of 03/03/2022, for Russia to cease all military operations in the vicinity of nuclear facilities, and against nuclear sites in Ukraine.

We are also very concerned about the safety of several research reactors as well as sites holding highly radioactive sources. As we have already underlined in our statement of 27 February 2022 "any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency", as per the decision adopted by the IAEA General Conference in 2009.

We fully support the initiative of IAEA Director General Grossi announced on Friday 4 March 2022 for an agreement between Ukraine and Russia to ensure the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine. We support the Director General's conduct of discussions and stand ready, in close coordination at EU level and with our international partners, to provide the necessary assistance to any international mission in support of any agreement on the safety and security. This must include the safety of the staff of the operator and of the national regulator and the possibility for them to conduct their normal duties.

ENSREG remains increasingly concerned about the situation on the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone. This is highlighted by:

- the continuing restrictions imposed on the onsite personnel to carry out routine maintenance and repair of safety-critical equipment;
- the inability to relieve shift personnel through regular rotation, the current shift having been on site for 11 days, indicates a significant humanitarian concern;
- the current fragility of the electrical supplies to the site, with only one supply line out of three available and back-up diesel power having sufficient fuel supplies for only 48 hours;
- the absence of effective communications between the site and the regulator, SNRIU.

ENSREG therefore reiterates its call on the Russian Federation to immediately cease its unlawful activities in order to restore SNRIU's control over all nuclear facilities and materials within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders, in line with the internationally recognised safety standards and security guidance.

ENSREG is ready to provide active support to the Ukrainian regulator, SNRIU.

ENSREG wishes to express its gratitude to the Ukrainian regulator SNRIU and its staff for their unwavering commitment in continuing, to the best of their ability, to supervise and provide timely reports on the state of nuclear safety and of the radiological situation in the country in these difficult conditions caused by the military invasion by Russia.
