

Information Circular

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General Distribution

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Communication from the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the Agency

1. On 25 February 2025, the Secretariat received a Note Verbale from the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the Agency.
2. As requested, the Note Verbale is herewith circulated for the information of all Member States.



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The Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna presents its compliments to the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency and has the honour to communicate the following.

Throughout January and early February 2025, numerous flights of Russian attack drones were recorded in the vicinity of Ukraine's nuclear facilities, posing significant threats to nuclear safety and security. Such incidents were observed near the South Ukraine Nuclear Power Plant and the Khmelnytskyi Nuclear Power Plant, with multiple drones detected during both the day and at night. Although no physical damage or operational disruptions were reported, the presence of the Russian strike UAVs in close proximity to critical infrastructure constitutes a clear violation of international nuclear safety standards and security guidelines, and underscores the Russian Federation's deliberate disregard for established international norms.

On 14 February 2025, during one of these drone attacks, a Geran-2 (Shahed-136 equivalent) UAV carrying a high-explosive warhead struck the protective shell of the New Safe Confinement (NSC) at the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant (ChNPP). This attack breached the containment integrity of the NSC and disrupted its primary function of isolating radioactive

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materials. According to the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine (SNRIU), the NSC can no longer fully perform its containment role, necessitating urgent measures to prevent further environmental and radiological risks.

In response to the attack, emergency teams from the State Emergency Service of Ukraine (SESU) and Chornobyl NPP personnel promptly extinguished the fire and initiated operations to identify and eliminate smouldering hotspots within the NSC structure. The localization and extinguishing of residual fire sources were conducted, including partial structural dismantling with the assistance of climbing specialists.

As of 24 February 2025, thermal imaging monitoring has detected no temperature anomalies, fire manifestations, or smoke within the NSC structure. Radiation levels at the industrial site and within the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone remain within control limits, with no release of radioactive substances beyond established thresholds. All firefighting systems have been reconfigured, and SESU resources remain fully operational and ready to respond to potential incidents.

This is not the first instance of facilities in the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone sustaining damage due to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine. During the initial phase of the full-scale invasion in February–March 2022, Russian forces occupied the Zone, inflicting severe damage on critical infrastructure. The occupation resulted in the destruction and looting of essential equipment for access control, physical security, and radiation monitoring, including the Automated Radiation Monitoring System. Scientific laboratories conducting radiation research, including the Central Analytical Laboratory of the “EkoCenter” enterprise, were vandalized, with valuable equipment either stolen or destroyed. Additionally, transportation infrastructure—bridges, logistical routes, and operational facilities—suffered extensive damage, leading to prolonged disruptions in personnel movement and operational schedules. The environmental impact

of this destruction has been profound, with landmines, military fortifications, and the degradation of ecosystems within the Chernobyl Radiation and Ecological Biosphere Reserve causing long-term consequences.

Despite these challenges, Ukraine, with the support of international partners, has made significant progress in restoring critical infrastructure, resuming radiation monitoring, and ensuring the safe operation of the Exclusion Zone.

The recent escalation of Russian drone attacks on Ukrainian nuclear facilities represents an unprecedented threat to global nuclear safety and security. The direct strike on the Chernobyl NSC is a grave violation of international norms, including the United Nations Charter, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and IAEA Safety Principles.

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine kindly requests the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency to promptly circulate this Note Verbale as an Information Circular to all IAEA Member States.

The Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the International Organizations in Vienna avails itself of this opportunity to renew to the Secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency the assurances of its highest consideration.



Vienna, 25 February 2025