

# Information Circular

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**General Distribution**

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## Communication from the Permanent Mission of Ukraine to the Agency

1. On 26 March 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.



**Permanent Mission of Ukraine**  
to the International Organizations  
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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.

The ongoing occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) by the Russian Federation continues to pose severe nuclear safety and security risks, primarily due to the acute shortage of experienced and licensed technical personnel. The facility is currently operated by an inadequately trained workforce, none of whom hold valid licenses issued by Ukraine's competent regulatory authority, the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine (SNRIU). This situation severely undermines the safe operation of the plant and increases the risk of nuclear incidents.

Since 1 February 2024, Russian occupying authorities have further exacerbated these risks by denying access to Ukrainian personnel who refused to sign employment contracts with Rosatom or accept Russian citizenship. The loss of experienced and licensed professionals has compromised operational safety, particularly in key reactor operations.

Despite Russian claims that staffing levels are sufficient for shutdown and maintenance, the actual workforce has been reduced to less than one-third of its pre-war capacity. Thousands of highly skilled and experienced personnel are no longer available. Reports indicate that control rooms are being operated by a single individual at times, which is entirely inadequate for ensuring safe operations and emergency response.

The personnel currently assigned by Russia lack essential training and expertise in Ukrainian VVER reactor technology, which has undergone significant modernization since Ukraine's independence in 1991, particularly with regard to safety

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systems. Specialized training programmes, qualified instructors, and simulator-based instruction—necessary to ensure the proper qualification of reactor operators—are absent under Russian control. Furthermore, the Russian regulatory authority lacks both legitimate jurisdiction and technical expertise regarding the ZNPP's specific safety and operational systems.

In addition, the working conditions for ZNPP personnel remain extremely precarious. Employees are subjected to coercion, arbitrary detentions, and constant surveillance by armed Russian forces, creating a climate of intimidation that directly undermines the site's safety culture. Such conditions blatantly violate fundamental IAEA safety and security principles, which require personnel to perform their duties in stable conditions without undue external interference or pressure.

Another critical safety concern is the continued vulnerability of the ZNPP's off-site power supply. Recurrent power disruptions since the beginning of the occupation have significantly increased the risk of nuclear accidents, including potential radiation releases, even with reactors in cold shutdown.

The destruction of the Kakhovka Dam in June 2023 further aggravated this situation by eliminating a key source of cooling water. The drilling of temporary wells as a substitute cooling measure contradicts established IAEA safety standards, including *SSG-71 Modifications to Nuclear Power Plants and SSR-2/2 Safety of Nuclear Power Plants: Commissioning and Operation (Rev. 1)*. Such modifications should only be implemented following comprehensive safety analyses, safety evaluations, and approval by qualified experts—none of which have been properly conducted under Russian control.

Furthermore, the militarization of the ZNPP by Russian forces, including the placement of military equipment and explosive mines within the facility, presents additional and unacceptable risks for personnel and the environment. Repeated mine explosions near critical infrastructure further threaten operational safety and directly violate IAEA safety principles, which emphasize the physical integrity of nuclear facilities and unimpeded working conditions for plant personnel.

Russia's continued restrictions on IAEA personnel access to key areas of the ZNPP severely hinder the Agency's ability to fulfill its safety and security mandate. Unrestricted access for both IAEA inspectors and ZNPP staff is essential to ensuring transparency, maintaining international oversight, and mitigating risks. Russia's persistent obstruction of independent monitoring



efforts underscores the deteriorating conditions at the facility and the growing nuclear hazard posed by its unlawful occupation.

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 March 2025