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**COMMUNICATION OF 7 JUNE 1996 RECEIVED FROM
THE PERMANENT MISSION OF UKRAINE
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

1. On 11 June 1996, the Director General received a communication of 7 June 1996 from the Resident Representative of Ukraine transmitting the Statement of the President of Ukraine made on 1 June 1996.
2. As requested by the Resident Representative of Ukraine, the Statement of the President of Ukraine is being circulated for the information of Member States of the Agency.

TEXT OF THE STATEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT OF UKRAINE

The process of removal of strategic nuclear weapons from the territory of Ukraine to the Russian Federation with a view to subsequent destruction in the presence of observers from Ukraine was completed on 1 June 1996. Ukraine has thus demonstrated to the world its firm attachment to the idea of global nuclear disarmament and its desire to bring mankind closer to the time when all peoples of our planet will be able to live without the threat of nuclear annihilation.

At one time, in the "Cold War" period, the people of Ukraine had to finance the exhausting race for nuclear armaments at the cost of their own well-being and economic development. For this reason, in declaring itself the owner of the nuclear weapons stationed in its territory which it had inherited from the former USSR, Ukraine regarded these weapons not as something that afforded it actual military strength but, first of all, as an asset which was to compensate it, at least in part, for the damage it had suffered. No nuclear threat to mankind ever emanated from independent Ukraine.

This is what guided the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine when in July 1990, in its declaration on State sovereignty, it announced that Ukraine would adhere to three non-nuclear principles - not to station, not to produce and not to obtain nuclear weapons.

This decision was reflected in all subsequent documents and practical steps of Ukraine in the area of nuclear disarmament, and thus the removal of the last nuclear weapon from the territory of Ukraine is its logical culmination and also the convincing proof of the consistency and predictability of our policy.

This historic event marks the timely and full compliance by our State with its obligations in accordance with the Trilateral Statement by the Presidents of Ukraine, the USA and Russia of 14 January 1994, and is Ukraine's important contribution to the disarmament process. However, this process cannot be unilateral, it must be supported and supplemented in the political and practical spheres by other countries, above all the nuclear countries. The total elimination of nuclear weapons stationed in the territory of Ukraine offers a unique opportunity for realizing the idea of a nuclear-free Central and Eastern Europe - from the Black Sea to the Baltic. The establishment of such a zone will help to create a climate of confidence between the countries in the region and greatly reduce the threat of new lines of separation appearing on the European continent.

The help which is being provided to us with the elimination of strategic nuclear weapons is highly appreciated in Ukraine. In fulfilling the international obligations assumed in this area, Ukraine is encountering a large number of problems which it does not have the ability to resolve all by itself. Therefore, having voluntarily given up the third largest nuclear potential in the world, we are entitled to hope that assistance will continue to be provided to Ukraine even after it has finally complied with the provisions of the Trilateral Statement by the Presidents of Ukraine, the USA and Russia of 14 January 1994. We are counting on long-term collaboration in this area in the interest of the whole of mankind.

Having experienced the disastrous consequences of the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant, the people of Ukraine are well aware of the real threat of a catastrophe that nuclear weapons pose to mankind. Ukraine is convinced that it has made the right decision by choosing a nuclear-free status, and calls upon other States, first and foremost the nuclear States, to follow the same path and to do everything possible so that nuclear weapons are eliminated from the face of our planet as quickly as possible and for ever.

1 June 1996

Leonid Kuchma