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**COMMUNICATION OF 18 JUNE 1996 RECEIVED FROM
THE PERMANENT MISSION OF BELARUS
TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY**

The following documents received from the Resident Representative of Belarus in a communication of 18 June 1996 are being circulated for the information of Member States of the Agency: the "Appeal to States Members of the United Nations on the tenth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant" signed by the Secretary General of the United Nations and the "Resolution of the European Parliament on the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident".

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Appeal to States Members of the United Nations on the
tenth anniversary of the accident at the Chernobyl
nuclear power plant^{2/}

Ten years separate us from the early-morning hours of 26 April 1986 when two powerful explosions in rapid succession destroyed the Unit 4 reactor of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, exposing the burning core and releasing 50 million curies of radioactive isotopes into the environment.

The scale of the accident, its impact on health and on the ecological situation transcended the boundaries of the zone around Chernobyl, indeed, the boundaries of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, the three countries which received the largest share of the fallout, becoming a global problem of concern to the entire world.

Even a decade later, however, this accident is much more than the worst technological disaster in the history of nuclear power generation; it is also a grave and continuing humanitarian tragedy.

By displacing hundreds of thousands of people, it severely damaged the socio-psychological fibre of the most seriously affected States. Radioactive contamination, health risks, both physical and mental, continue to affect vast populations in these three countries.

That tragic event 10 years ago continues to this day to have a devastating effect on the social and economic life in Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, obliging them to grapple with the most acute of its consequences. Chernobyl, however, represents a long-term problem of unprecedented complexity, which can only be tackled successfully through the combined efforts of the entire international community.

The International Conference, "One Decade after Chernobyl: Summing Up the Consequences of the Accident", held recently at Vienna, fully attested to this fact. Indeed, it brought together nuclear scientists, doctors, political leaders of Member States, organizations of the United Nations system, the European Commission and others for a thorough and detailed assessment of the situation 10 years later, and of the level and adequacy of the assistance provided and research undertaken. The results of the Conference clearly point to the need for intensifying assistance to vast segments of the populations of the affected States, as well as to the need for further research into what is still very much an evolving science.

Recognizing the universal importance of the Chernobyl disaster, the General Assembly at its fiftieth session declared 26 April 1996 to be the International Day Commemorating the Tenth Anniversary of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant Accident. In its resolution 50/134 the General Assembly invites Member States to conduct appropriate activities to commemorate this tragic event and to enhance public awareness of the consequences of such disasters for health and the environment throughout the world.

^{2/} Reproduced from the annex to United Nations General Assembly document A/50/924.

The United Nations today remains profoundly concerned by the continuing impact of this disaster on the lives and health of large numbers of people, particularly children. I cannot stress enough that Chernobyl is still a major humanitarian tragedy, and that with the passage of time, the suffering has not abated.

In any realistic forecast of the challenges facing the United Nations, we must accept that Chernobyl and its consequences will remain on the international agenda. The occasion of the tenth anniversary of the accident provides us with a special opportunity to express a renewed commitment to help those who are asking for our assistance. It is also a chance to reinforce our common effort to respond to this continuing humanitarian and technological disaster.

As the Secretary-General of the United Nations, I am therefore taking this opportunity to appeal to Member States to continue and to intensify their assistance to Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, so that a tangible difference can be made in the lives of those still suffering at the hands of the "invisible enemy".

Boutros BOUTROS-GHALI

Resolution of the European Parliament on the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl accident

The European Parliament,

- having regard to its resolution of 8 April 1987 on the consequences of the Chernobyl accident and on the outline communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council on the consequences of the Chernobyl accident and the communication from the Commission of the European Communities to the Council on Community action to be taken in response to the Chernobyl accident^{1/},
 - having regard to its resolution of 8 April 1987 on the problem of contamination of foodstuffs following the Chernobyl disaster^{2/},
 - having regard to its resolution of 8 April 1987 on the reaction of the Community to Chernobyl^{3/},
 - having regard to its opinion of 15 December 1993 on the proposal for a Council Decision amending Decision 77/270 (Euratom) to authorize the Commission to contract Euratom borrowings in order to contribute to the financing required for improving the degree of efficiency and safety of nuclear power stations in certain non-Member countries^{4/},
 - having regard to its resolution of 15 December 1993 on nuclear safety in the countries of Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)^{5/},
- A. whereas, ten years after the Chernobyl nuclear disaster, which caused thousands of deaths by radioactive contamination and which is still having tragic consequences for the health of millions of people - particularly as a result of the increase in the incidence of cancer and leukaemia - and for the state of the environment, the risks of a fresh accident remain, both on the Chernobyl site itself and in all other nuclear power stations,

^{1/} OJ C 125, 11.5.1987, p. 96.

^{2/} OJ C 125, 11.5.1987, p. 91.

^{3/} OJ C 125, 11.5.1987, p. 92.

^{4/} OJ C 20, 24.1.1994, p. 99.

^{5/} OJ C 20, 24.1.1994, p. 107.

- B. whereas a serious incident occurred in reactor 1 at the Chernobyl nuclear power station on 27 November 1995,
- C. greatly concerned by the report by 'Alliance', a consortium responsible for carrying out, within the framework of the TACIS programme, a feasibility study on stabilization of the sarcophagus of block 4 in Chernobyl, whose conclusions concerning the risk of collapse of this sarcophagus are particularly alarming; noting that the costs for the construction of a new sarcophagus are estimated at US \$ 1.6 billion over a period of 10 years,
- D. aware that the Chernobyl nuclear power plant contributes about 7% to the electricity supply of Ukraine,
- E. pointing out that the Ukrainian Government admits that Ukraine is one of the most energy-intensive countries in the world, using at least 3 times the amount of energy per unit of GNP as the European Union,
- F. drawing attention to the fact that over the last few years electricity consumption in these countries has fallen by an amount which significantly exceeds nuclear power generation,
- G. referring to the International Conference now taking place in Vienna,
- H. noting that the G7, Russia and Ukraine will discuss nuclear safety at a special summit in Moscow in April 1996,
- I. acknowledging that the European Union has an important role to play in helping the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union in their efforts to improve the safety and efficiency of their energy systems,
- J. recalling the Memorandum of Understanding in which the G7 promised to help finance a solution to the Chernobyl problem,
 - 1. Emphasizes that 10 years after the Chernobyl disaster, no nuclear power station, either RBMK or VVER 440-230, has yet been shut down, in spite of the opinion of Western experts, and that the working conditions of these installations, far from improving, have in fact deteriorated, since they have become more decrepit and are controlled by personnel lacking training;
 - 2. Calls on the authorities of the countries which are still operating high-risk power stations to decommission them as quickly as possible and to focus, on the one hand, on improving the safety of more recent types of nuclear power station, and, on the other, on developing programmes to save energy and improve energy efficiency,

3. Stresses the need to make available as much financial and technical aid as possible to assist Ukraine in making the destroyed reactor block safe and to contribute to the cleaning up of the contaminated areas , also in Russia and Belarus;
4. Requests the Commission to develop a genuine strategy, in the framework of the PHARE and TACIS programmes, in order to promote energy saving programmes and sustainable energy resources, notably by more efficient utilization of energy and the recourse to less expensive and less dangerous sources of energy;
5. Calls on the Ukrainian Government to comply with the Memorandum of Understanding that it signed with the G7 in Ottawa, which provides for the closure of Chernobyl by the year 2000;
6. Calls for least-cost studies to be made a precondition for the granting of aid;
7. Calls on the Commission to continue the Chernobyl project, which provides medical aid to Ukraine, Belarus and Russia, and requests that aid to victims of the disaster be reinforced, as well as support for NGOs participating in this aid;
8. Calls on the Commission to submit to it an assessment of the impact of the Chernobyl disaster on public health, the environment and agriculture in the countries of the European Union;
9. Requests the Commission to inform, as a priority, Parliament's competent committees of the results of the study carried out within the framework of ECHO, the preparation for nuclear disasters in the countries of Eastern Europe and the action it intends to take following these conclusions, not only in regard to these countries, but also in regard to the European Union which would also be affected by another nuclear disaster;
10. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Commission, the Council, the governments of the Member States, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the G7, the CIS and the IAEA.