



Update 330 - IAEA Director General Statement on Situation in Ukraine

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The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has deployed additional staff to Ukraine's Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) this week to conduct a comprehensive safety assessment of the damaged New Safe Confinement (NSC) following a drone strike last February, IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi announced today.

At the request of the State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine (SNRIU), staff from the IAEA's Department of Nuclear Safety and Security joined the IAEA's Support and Assistance Mission to Chornobyl, which has been continuously present at the site since January 2023. Their objective is to evaluate the current condition and operational status of the NSC after the 14 February 2025 attack.

The NSC, completed in 2016, is a protective structure built to enclose the Shelter Object, which itself covers the remains of Unit 4 that was destroyed in the 1986 accident. While February's drone strike did not lead to any release of radioactive material, it caused significant structural damage, affecting the NSC's designed confinement function and projected lifetime. During the mission, the IAEA team will review the measures currently in place to mitigate risks and discuss the plant's plans to restore the NSC's functionality and address any potential nuclear safety concerns.

Separately, this week at Ukraine's three operating nuclear power plants - Khmelnytsky, Rivne and South Ukraine - electricity output has largely returned to normal after last week's military attacks on the electrical grid. Nearly all power units are now operating at full capacity, with only one unit remaining at reduced power. Additionally, the high voltage power lines lost during the attacks have all been restored.

Following sustained attacks on Ukraine's electrical grid, the IAEA is preparing to deploy a team to visit several substations critical to nuclear safety. The expert mission will evaluate the latest damage and potential impact on NPP operations. The mission will be the sixth of its kind.

At the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP), IAEA staff present at the plant has reported hearing military activity daily, often very close to the plant. On some days, the team reported hearing explosions and gunfire roughly 20 times – sometimes much more.

Despite the regular sound of military activities in the area, the IAEA team at the ZNPP have continued to conduct walkdowns across the plant to monitor and assess nuclear safety and security. In recent days, the team performed walkdowns of two turbine halls and the radioactive waste storage facilities. They also observed the testing of an emergency diesel generator and discussed the cooling water situation on-site, one of the most challenging topics for nuclear safety and security at the ZNPP.

The IAEA has organized a new round of deliveries under its comprehensive programme of assistance to Ukraine, bringing the total number of shipments to 185 since the start of the conflict.

The State Specialized Enterprises "Central Enterprise for the Management of Radioactive Waste" and "Association Radon" as well as the National Science Center "Kharkov Institute of Physics and Technology" received a range of items designed to enhance nuclear security, surveillance capabilities and field operations at the sites.

Under the IAEA's ISAMKO programme, the Ukrainian Geological Company received two water analysers and portable IT equipment to support field work. The State Scientific Research Institute of Laboratory Diagnostic and Veterinary Sanitary Expertise also received equipment for the cleaning of dioxins, a group of harmful environmental pollutants.

Under the IAEA's medical assistance programme, Varash hospital and the Rivne NPP received medical items and supplies, while the Netishyn hospital received a complete laparoscopic system.

The deliveries were made possible through financial support from the European Union, Italy, Japan and the United Kingdom.

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