

Appeal to the United Nations Secretary-General and the Security Council to urgently prevent nuclear disaster at the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant

In the heart of Europe, Ukraine, a founding member of the United Nations, endured significant radiation damage from the Chernobyl disaster in 1986. Ukraine voluntarily relinquished its Soviet nuclear weapons less than a decade later, seeking peace and guarantees of sovereignty and territorial integrity under the Budapest Memorandum of 1994. However, these assurances have been violated by Russia's invasion and the war now raging in Ukraine and around Europe's largest nuclear power plant complex, at Zaporizhzhia, which poses a critical threat at present.

The conflict and its direct impact on the nuclear facility have prompted global leaders to demand effective measures to ensure the safety and security of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (Z/NPP). The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has deployed multiple missions and observers. Numerous groups comprising distinguished former Presidents and Prime Ministers, as well as civil society activists from around the world, have called for preventive action to safeguard the facility's integrity and prevent its use as a military target or resource. The United Nations General Assembly has expressed its concern "about the grave humanitarian consequences of a possible accident resulting from the bombing and shelling of the Ukrainian nuclear infrastructure, reiterating the obligation to ensure the safety and security of all nuclear infrastructure, and expressing concern about the impact of the conflict on the environment".¹

The risk must also be seen in the context of the *G7 Leaders' Hiroshima Vision on Nuclear Disarmament* of 19 May 2023,² and the InterAction Council's *Hiroshima Declaration: A Plea for Zero Nuclear Weapons* of 19 April 2010.³ The same InterAction Council made a very specific recommendation on 17 May 2023,⁴ namely that the UN Security Council should reinforce the presence of UN/IAEA observers around the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant to prevent any interference with the plant's proper management and operation, including the threat of false-flag or sabotage acts.

This concern has grown enormously, and imminently in recent weeks: first on account of the Kakhovka Dam destruction (which apart from the ecocide and human devastation, also compromises the cooling system capability at the Z/NPP), and lately on account of reports of substantial explosive risks around several of the six reactors, and in the past few days, Russia's obligatory evacuation order of all military and technical personnel from the Z/NPP, with an evacuation deadline of 5 July given.

¹ <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N22/301/67/PDF/N2230167.pdf?OpenElement>

² https://www.g7hiroshima.go.jp/documents/pdf/230520-01_g7_en.pdf

³ <https://www.interactioncouncil.org/publications/hiroshima-declaration-plea-zero-nuclear-weapons>

⁴ <https://www.interactioncouncil.org/index.php/publications/37th-annual-plenary-meeting>

	ADDRESS	Email	Web
c/o Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability (FOGGS)	Rue Abbé Cuypers 3 1040 Brussels Belgium	info@foggs.org	www.foggs.org/prg

**PEACEMAKING
REFLECTION GROUP**
OF FORMER UN SYSTEM STAFF
SUPPORTED BY THE
FOUNDATION FOR GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND SUSTAINABILITY

We, the undersigned members of the Peacemaking Reflection Group (PRG), fully and urgently endorse the InterAction Council recommendation. We also acknowledge President Zelensky of Ukraine's call for international preventive action and the Russian Federation's request to the IAEA for assistance in preventing any destructive incidents.⁵

We appeal to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, H.E. António Guterres, in collaboration with the Director-General of the IAEA, to expeditiously raise this matter with the UN Security Council and urge the Permanent Five members of the Security Council to recognize the urgency of an enhanced preventive deployment of UN/IAEA Observers and the establishment of a UN or OSCE monitoring and verification mission for the vicinity of the Z/NPP. The objective is to ensure that the facility continues to be safely-managed and exclusively used for civilian purposes and that no military actions occur within a suitable radius as advised by the IAEA. This concerted effort is crucial to prevent a further catastrophe that would permanently devastate a large surrounding area and would have grave global ramifications.

Signed:

NAME			CURRENT TITLE / POSITION*	FORMER UN SYSTEM POSITION(S)
FAMILY	FIRST	MIDDLE		
ANGELO	Victor			UN USG/SRSG
ASKWITH	Michael			UN Resident Coordinator, UNDP Resident Representative Representative, UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs (DHA)
BETTELLI	Paola		Senior Advisor, FOGGS	Deputy Director, UN Regional Commissions New York Office
CHATURVEDI	Suvira			UNIFEM Head of Office (Kosovo), UNDP Chief Technical Adviser (Bangladesh, Yemen), UNICEF & ILO Senior Expert (Gender Equality & Women's Empowerment)
FRANÇAIS	Patrice	Ariel		UN Resident Coordinator
HASEGAWA	Sukehiro		Distinguished Professor, Kyoto University of the Arts and Director of the Kyoto Peacebuilding Center, President of the Global Peacebuilding Association of Japan, and Director of ACUNS Tokyo Liaison Office	Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Timor-Leste (2004-2006), Resident and Humanitarian Coordinator for Rwanda (1995-96) and Timor-Leste (2002-2006)

⁵ <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/russia-asks-iaea-ensure-zaporizhzhia-nuclear-plant-security-2023-06-23/>

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c/o Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability (FOGGS)	Rue Abbé Cuypers 3 1040 Brussels Belgium	info@foggs.org	www.foggs.org/prg

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HEYN	Michael			UNDP Regional Representative (Asia & Pacific), UN Special Coordinator for Emergency Relief (Liberia), UN Special Delegate (Kosovo)
KARLSSON	Mats			Vice President World Bank (1999-2002), Vice Chair UN High-Level Committee on Programs (2000-2010), Founding Chair UN-Energy (2002-2006)
KOLLIES	Ute			Director, OCHA/UN Secretariat
KOSTAKOS	Georgios		Executive Director, FOGGS	Senior Officer, EOSG/UNFCCC and CEB Secretariat; Acting Deputy Executive Secretary, High-level Panel on Global Sustainability
LEITNER	Kerstin		Member of the Board, UNA-Germany	ADG Health and Environment, WHO
MØLLER	Michael		Member of the Geneva Science and Diplomacy Anticipator Foundation Board, Senior Advisor at Macro Advisory Partners and Member of the Boards of the Kofi Annan Foundation and One Young World	Director-General of the UN Office in Geneva, UN Under-Secretary-General
MOUSOURIS	Sotirios		President. Hellenic-African Chamber of Commerce and Development	Assistant Secretary-General, UN Secretariat (1982-1995)
O'DONNELL	Francis	Martin	Ambassador, formerly for SMOM to Slovakia (2009-2013) Trustee/Board Director, School of Civic Education (UK, ex-Moscow)	UN Resident Coordinator in Ukraine (2004-2009) and Serbia-Montenegro (2000-2004); Principal Advisor & Team Leader, Governance in Crisis Countries, UNDP (1999)
ROSE	Tore	F.	Independent senior consultant, including in Ukraine in 2014-15 re Donbas	Director, UN Resident Coordinator in Algeria, Mali and Rwanda
ROSENBLUM-KUMAR	Gay			Executive Secretary, UN Interagency Framework Team for Preventive Action
ROSENTHAL	Gert			Executive Secretary of ECLAC
RYAN	Jordan	Dimock	Senior Counsel, Hamilton Advisors	ASG/DSRSG UNMIL, Assistant Administrator UNDP, Director BCPR
SCHUMANN	Peter			Assistant Secretary-General, UN/AU Deputy Joint Special Representative
SLUTKIN	Gary		Founder and Founding CEO, Cure Violence Global	World Health Organization, Deputy Director Country Programs (GPA); Chief, Intervention Development

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VANDEWEERD	Veerle			Director, Environment and Energy Group, UNDP
WALKER	Neal	G.		Former UN RC & HC in Ukraine, 2014 - 2018

*The signatories above join in their capacities as members or supporters of the PRG. This does not represent the views of any other groups or organizations, with which they may be affiliated.

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