



**Permanent Mission of  
the Republic of Belarus to  
the United Nations**



**Permanent Mission of  
the Russian Federation  
to the United Nations**



**Permanent Mission of  
Ukraine  
to the United Nations**

### **JOINT PRESS RELEASE**

#### **27 years after Chernobyl disaster: cooperation for sustainable development**

Twenty seven years ago the world witnessed one of the worst disasters in the history of the mankind. The Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant disaster, that occurred on April 26, 1986, led to the loss of human lives, contamination of territories, huge number of displaced persons and loss of livelihood.

The disaster had significant political influence and changed approach to the use of nuclear energy. International standards and rules of radiation protection, national strategies of nuclear energy development, radioactive waste management were revised in order to enhance nuclear safety.

The Chernobyl disaster became a lesson for the humanity and forced everyone to reassess the reliability of the safety requirements for nuclear power facilities. Analysis of the causes and consequences of the catastrophe is of paramount importance in the context of the growing demand for energy resources. Globally there are more than 400 nuclear power plants in use and their number is expected to increase in the nearest future. In this regard we think that the main lesson of the Chernobyl tragedy is in the understanding of the necessity to ensure relevant safety of NPPs. Free exchange of experience and scientific researches, dissemination of technologies for nuclear safety should become the main principle of multilateral cooperation in this sphere.

The Governments of three most affected countries have been undertaking significant efforts to overcome the legacy of the Chernobyl catastrophe. In this respect during all these years one of the core issues was to determine a balanced approach to the use of the contaminated areas while providing relevant radiation protection for the people living on the affected territories, create conditions for stable economic and social development of local communities, the revival of agricultural production, medium and small business. We welcome the start work of Belarus and Ukraine in the UN Scientific Committee on the Effects of the Atomic Radiation in 2012 as full-pledged members of the Committee whose expertise and experience are of great importance in dealing with the consequences of Chernobyl.

Notwithstanding the closure of the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant at the end of last century it still remains the potential source of contamination. In this regard we are pleased to acknowledge the progress achieved in construction of the New Safe Confinement. Namely, November 24, 2012 witnessed the first ascent of the arch construction of the New Safe Confinement but much more is still to be done to complete this unique project.

The three States emphasize the need to continue and step up activities within the Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development (2006-2016), proclaimed by the UN General Assembly in its resolution 62/9. We confirm the importance of the United Nations coordinating role in the international cooperation on Chernobyl and appreciate the personal involvement and interest of the UN Secretary-General Mr. Ban Ki-moon to the needs and problems of the most affected countries.

We also express support to the efforts of UNDP Administrator, Ms. Helen Clark, in implementation of the updated UN Action Plan for Chernobyl Recovery to 2016. We welcome the active participation of all involved UN agencies, the World Bank, International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations in the UN Action Plan's realization. We acknowledge commitment and valuable support of donors to the post-Chernobyl recovery efforts and implementation of a range of projects that assist local communities. It is essential that all agencies participating in the international cooperation on Chernobyl continue to apply efforts to mitigate the disaster's consequences and to implement all agreements in this field.

On this day we pay tribute to those who sacrificed their lives to save their contemporaries and succeeding generations from the scourges of Chernobyl.

April 26, 2013, New York