

Statement on the conflict in Ukraine from the world's nuclear energy workers

04 April 2022

Deeply concerned by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the exposure of nuclear facilities to fighting and worrying public rhetoric, the undersigned scientists, engineers and professionals of the nuclear energy sector, represented by the American and European Nuclear Society:

- Recognise the dedication and expertise of our Ukrainian colleagues who have been safely generating the power that citizens need;
- Condemn the attack on the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant on 3 March 2022, which was a violation of article 56 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventionsⁱ which protects civil infrastructure including nuclear power plants, dams and dykes from attack;
- Demand an end to further hostilities at any nuclear energy facility and decry any military action, whether deliberate or careless, which reduces the safety of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, nuclear energy workers or International Atomic Energy Agency officials in Ukraine;
- Support the work of the International Atomic Energy Agency to establish a framework for the continued safe operation of nuclear facilities in Ukraine, noting the importance of ensuring there is no undue pressure on workers carrying out important tasks;
- Reject unfounded allegations that Ukraine is using its civilian nuclear program to develop weapons and support the authority of the International Atomic Energy Agency to resolve questions about this and any other matters of non-proliferation.
- Condemn any interference with the International Atomic Energy Agency's monitoring equipment at Ukrainian nuclear facilities;
- Denounce misinformation spread by any party regarding the safety status of nuclear facilities, as well as misinformation about the risks that a release of radioactive material could present to the public;

For decades nuclear energy has avoided the use of dangerous and polluting fossil fuels. In doing so it has saved more than 1.8 million lives around the world from premature deaths in the last half-centuryⁱⁱ and reduced the risk of conflict between global powers in competition for resources.

In this decade nuclear energy stands as a major tool in the global response to climate changeⁱⁱⁱ, because it produces low-carbon heat and electricity while sustainably managing its supply chains and wastes^{iv}. Nuclear power workers are proud of their role in sustainable energy development.

Actions which jeopardise nuclear safety or manipulate public fear of radiation will yield disadvantages to all involved in this conflict. Irresponsible tactics regarding nuclear risks stand to exacerbate suffering and reduce the tools at humanity's disposal for the common challenges of peaceful, sustainable development and avoiding climate change.

Signed



EUROPEAN NUCLEAR SOCIETY

ENS President
Professor Leon Cizelj



ANS President
Steven P. Nesbit

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'S. P. Nesbit', is placed over a white rectangular background.



<https://www.ans.org/donate/form/appeal-ukraine/>

i Fighting at Ukraine Nuclear Power Site Irresponsible, against Geneva Conventions, Under-Secretary-General Tells Security Council, UN SC, 2022, <https://reliefweb.int/report/ukraine/fighting-ukraine-nuclear-power-site-irresponsible-against-geneva-conventions-under>

ii Prevented Mortality and Greenhouse Gas Emission from Historical and Projected Nuclear Power, Kharecha Pushker and James Hansen, 2013, <https://pubs.acs.org/doi/abs/10.1021/es3051197>

iii Climate Change and the Role of Nuclear Power, International Atomic Energy Agency, 2020, <https://www.iaea.org/publications/14763/climate-change-and-the-role-of-nuclear-power>

iv Technical assessment of nuclear energy with respect to the 'do no significant harm' criteria of Regulation (EU) 2020/852 ('Taxonomy Regulation'), European Commission Joint Research Centre, 2021, <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC125953>