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Answer given by High Representative/Vice-President Borrell i Fontelles
on behalf of the European Commission
(15.11.2024)

Russia's actions in and around the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) pose serious and direct threats to the safety and security of the nuclear facility, its operating staff, the surrounding area, and wider region. The EU attaches great importance to global nuclear safety and security and supports the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in this context. Russia bears the full responsibility for its continuing nuclear threats in the context of its war of aggression against Ukraine.

The EU position in relation to the ZNPP remains clear: Russia must immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders and hand back full control of the ZNPP to the competent Ukrainian authorities. This position is consistent with the President of Ukraine's peace formula on nuclear safety, and in line with the United Nations (UN) General Assembly resolution on the safety and security of nuclear facilities of Ukraine[1] and the IAEA Board of Governors' resolution calling for Russia to withdraw from ZNPP[2].

The EU supports the IAEA's continued presence at Ukraine's nuclear power plants, the IAEA Director General's seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security in armed conflict and the five principles to avoid a nuclear accident at ZNPP[3]. IAEA experts must have unrestricted and timely access to all locations to monitor implementation.

As regards the European Peace Facility, the use of military equipment provided by Member States to Ukraine is intended to help Ukraine defend itself against Russia's war of aggression, in line with international law and notably the UN Charter[4]. The EU is not aware of any Ukrainian attacks on nuclear power plants.

[1] https://undocs.org/Home/Mobile?FinalSymbol=A%2F78%2FL.90&Language=E&DeviceType=Desktop&LangRequested=False
[2] https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/documents/gov2024-18.pdf
[3] https://www.iaea.org/statements/iaea-director-general-statement-to-united-nations-security-council-25-january-2024
[4] https://www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter