

## **On Participation of the Republic of Belarus in the International Cooperation on Chernobyl**

The Republic of Belarus undertakes consistent steps and measures to draw attention and mobilize resources of the world community to the most pressing problems related to the Chernobyl Disaster, including rehabilitation of contaminated territories, revival of social and economic activity and provision of safe living conditions for the people in the affected areas. This approach proposed by Belarus is recognized at the international level today.

The triennial United Nations General Assembly (UN GA) Chernobyl-related resolutions are an important instrument for the strengthening of the relevant intergovernmental cooperation. Resolutions mandate organizations of the UN system to implement international Chernobyl-related programs and projects.

In December 2016 the 71st UN GA Session adopted resolution “Persistent Consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster” which was co-sponsored by about 60 UN Member States including Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, France, Germany, Georgia, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the United States, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine.

The resolution highly appreciates the activities of the Governments of the affected States aimed at overcoming the consequences of the disaster and urges all relevant organizations of the UN system to support their efforts aimed at fulfillment of the Chernobyl-related social and economic as well as medical and environmental programs, including through partnerships, innovations and investments.

The principal importance of the document is that in the coming years the post-2016 international cooperation on Chernobyl will be embedded in a global context of sustainable development agenda and increasing of preparedness to man-made disasters, including radiation accidents.

Belarus works actively on an applying of the whole potential of the United Nations Inter-Agency Task Force (IATF) on Chernobyl in the areas of formation of favorable conditions for continuation of the international Chernobyl cooperation, and full-scale realization of the UN Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development of the Affected Regions and the UN Action Plan on Chernobyl (2006-2016).

The IATF meeting was held the first time in Minsk in May 2014. The event initiated a process of development of the new framework of the international Chernobyl cooperation for the post-2016 period. The subsequent expert meetings in Vienna (2015) and Minsk (2015 and 2016) elaborated joint recommendations for further development of the multilateral cooperation.

The International Conference “Chernobyl Thirty Years Later. From an Emergency Situation to a Revival and Sustainable Socio-Economic Development of Affected Territories” was held on April 25, 2016 in Minsk. Representatives of 37 states, 12 intergovernmental organizations, and a number of foreign non-governmental organizations participated in the event.

The conference generalized an experience of cooperation within the UN Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development of the Affected Regions. The Conference's Declaration which was circulated as an official document of the UN General Assembly contains an appeal to develop and exercise under the UN auspices the International Initiative "Achieving Sustainable Development Goals in the Chernobyl-Affected Regions through Partnerships, Innovations and Investments".

The President of the Republic Belarus awarded UNDP Administrator Ms.H.Clark and UNDP Regional Director Ms.Č.Sultanoglu with the Orders of Francysk Skaryna for UNDP's significant contribution to overcoming consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster and rehabilitation of affected territories.

A special commemorative meeting of the United Nations General Assembly devoted to Chernobyl took place on April 26, 2016 in New York. Belarus granted an honorary right to speak on its behalf to the Head of the Irish Charity Organization "Chernobyl Children International" Ms.A.Roche in order to highlight consolidation of multinational efforts to overcome consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster and assist the affected population.

The Permanent Representative of Belarus to the UN made a statement on behalf of the Group of the Eastern European States and stressed that the United Nations efforts to coordinate the Chernobyl cooperation constitute an investment in the future, sustainable development and safety.

The overcoming of long-term consequences of the largest man-made catastrophe of the 20th century demands advanced technologies and scientific and financial potential of the whole international community. The Republic of Belarus actively interacts with foreign partners – governmental and non-governmental organizations, agencies, funds, companies and citizens of foreign countries on minimization of consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster.

In 1991-2015 the Republic of Belarus received an international technical support from intergovernmental organizations which amounts up to US\$ 85 million. Donor countries and foreign non-governmental organizations provided charitable assistance which makes total US\$ 400 million.

Major Chernobyl-related projects were implemented in the framework of the Union State of Belarus and Russia. Inter alia, the Republican Center of Radiation Medicine and Human Ecology in Gomel was constructed and equipped with an advanced equipment; policlinics and hospitals in affected regions of Belarus and Russia were built. The Belarusian-Russian Information Center on the Problems of the Consequences of the Catastrophe at Chernobyl NPP with branches in Minsk and Moscow was established. The fundamental atlas which was devoted to the forecasts of radiology situation in Belarus and Russia for the period till 2056 was published. The total cost of the joint Belarusian-Russian projects amounts to US\$ 90 million.

The Ministry of Emergency Situation of the Republic of Belarus is a national coordinator of Chernobyl-related projects of UNDP, IAEA, WHO and UNICEF, including the regional IAEA' project "Support for the Rehabilitation

of the Areas Affected by the Chernobyl NPP Accident” and UNDP, WHO, UNICEF projects carried out within the International Chernobyl Research and Information Network (ICRIN).

The Republic of Belarus is open for cooperation with all interested partners to minimize consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster on the basis of equality, mutual respect and benefit.

The efficient advocacy of the international Chernobyl cooperation is one of the priorities of the Belarusian diplomatic and consular missions. All available resources are using in order to raise awareness of the international community concerning efforts of the Republic of Belarus aimed at overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster.

These actions are focused on necessity of retention and development of the international Chernobyl cooperation under the UN auspices and its support by bilateral programmes and projects. In April-May 2016 almost all Belarusian diplomatic and consular missions organized memorial actions aimed at raising of awareness of the consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster and drawing of worldwide attention to grass-roots needs, revival and sustainable development of Chernobyl-affected regions.

On 20 April, 2016 in the UN Headquarters (New York) Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belarus Mr.V.Makei took part in the opening ceremony of the Chernobyl exhibition arranged by Belarus. Also the special event and the exhibition of paintings by Belarusian children “Colouring Chernobyl” was held in the Palace of Nations (Geneva). The photo exhibition “Belarus: 30 years after the Chernobyl accident” was held in the Council of Europe (Strasbourg).

The Chernobyl-related “round tables” and other thematic events were organized with the support of Belarusian diplomatic and consular missions in Headquarters of the European Parliament (Brussels) and the OSCE (Vienna). Other actions also took place in countries of accreditation of Belarusian diplomatic and consular missions.

Numerous interviews of top officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Belarusian diplomatic and consular missions dedicated to the efforts of the Republic of Belarus on overcoming the consequences of the Chernobyl Disaster, revival of the affected territories and development of the international Chernobyl cooperation were published in the international and national media.



# General Assembly

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## Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 8 December 2016

[without reference to a Main Committee (A/71/L.28 and Add.1)]

### 71/125. Persistent legacy of the Chernobyl disaster

*The General Assembly,*

*Reaffirming* its resolution [68/99](#) of 13 December 2013 on the strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, as well as its other relevant resolutions, on closure of the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, and taking note of the decisions adopted by the relevant United Nations bodies, the specialized agencies and other organizations of the United Nations system in the implementation of those resolutions,

*Acknowledging* the importance of the efforts made by the Governments of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine, the United Nations system, other international organizations and civil society to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster,

*Acknowledging also* the organization of the international conference entitled “Chernobyl 30 years later: from an emergency to a revival and sustainable social and economic development of affected territories”, held in Minsk on 25 April 2016, and taking note of the adoption of the Minsk Declaration,<sup>1</sup>

*Recognizing*, three decades after the Chernobyl disaster, the still-persistent serious long-term consequences thereof, as well as the continuing related needs of the affected communities and territories,

*Noting* the completion of the Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development of the Affected Regions, 2006–2016,<sup>2</sup>

*Recalling* its resolutions [53/199](#) of 15 December 1998 and [61/185](#) of 20 December 2006 on the proclamation of international years and Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on international years and anniversaries,

<sup>1</sup> [A/70/916](#), annex.

<sup>2</sup> See resolution [62/9](#).



*Welcoming* global efforts to enhance awareness of the needs of people and territories affected by the Chernobyl disaster, including through web-based resources,

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on optimizing the international effort to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster;<sup>3</sup>

2. *Greatly appreciates* the coordinating role of the United Nations Development Programme in the international cooperation on Chernobyl, including the work undertaken by the Inter-Agency Task Force on Chernobyl;

3. *Acknowledges* the need for continuing international cooperation on Chernobyl under the auspices of the United Nations that can contribute to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development<sup>4</sup> and the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030;<sup>5</sup>

4. *Stresses* the need, in this regard, to continue the environmental and health monitoring of the Chernobyl-affected regions and communities for the purpose of assessing the efficiency of international assistance;

5. *Encourages* Member States and all interested partners to support international cooperation on Chernobyl aimed at achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the Chernobyl-affected regions, including through partnerships, innovation and investment;

6. *Acknowledges* the need to enhance networking around specialized national scientific institutions to study long-term medical, radioecological, radiobiological and other consequences of the Chernobyl disaster;

7. *Recognizes* the role of regional centres, as referred to in the Minsk Declaration,<sup>1</sup> in raising awareness among the population of the Chernobyl-affected regions on the issues of personal and social safety to ensure better adaptation with respect to the consequences of the Chernobyl disaster;

8. *Requests* the United Nations Development Programme and the Inter-Agency Task Force on Chernobyl to continue to coordinate international cooperation on Chernobyl as a means to further the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and to continue to develop, in collaboration with the affected countries and in consultation with Member States, a concise outline of general principles of engagement of the United Nations system in Chernobyl recovery efforts, along with agency-specific priorities, following the completion of the Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development of the Affected Regions, 2006–2016;

9. *Decides*, in order to raise awareness of the long-term consequences of the Chernobyl disaster, to designate 26 April as International Chernobyl Disaster Remembrance Day, to be observed every year beginning in 2017, invites all Member States, relevant agencies of the United Nations system and other international organizations, as well as civil society, to observe the day, and notes that the costs of all activities that may arise should be met from voluntary contributions;

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<sup>3</sup> [A/71/411](#).

<sup>4</sup> Resolution [70/1](#).

<sup>5</sup> Resolution [69/283](#), annex II.

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its seventy-fourth session, under a separate sub-item, a report on the implementation of the present resolution.

*57th plenary meeting  
8 December 2016*

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