



Press Advisory

Groups Convene International Meeting to Explore the Impacts of the Nuclear Age

for further information contact:
Alexander Nikitin
Aleksandr@bellona.no

Monday, May 25, 2009

***Global Nuclear Legacy Project* shines a light on the human and environmental legacy of six decades of nuclear weapons and energy**

US and Russian nuclear oversight organizations are working together to convene an international meeting as part of the Global Nuclear Legacy Project in late May in Budapest, Hungary to explore the worldwide health and environmental impacts of nuclear weapons and energy production and explore safe paths forward.

Sponsors in the *Global Nuclear Legacy Project* include [Hanford Challenge](#), the [Government Accountability Project](#) and the [Alliance for Nuclear Accountability](#) in the US, and the [Movement for Nuclear Safety](#) and the [Environmental Rights Center Bellona](#) in Russia. For nearly a decade, these organizations have cooperated on an international grassroots effort to bring safety and accountability to the nuclear industry.

Tom Carpenter, Executive Director of Hanford Challenge, said, "The Hanford Site in Washington State is where the nuclear age made the jump from being a theoretical concept to the industrial and environmental reality that we know today. After more than six decades, it's time to examine what has really been created here, and in other countries with sites just like Hanford, and how to move forward in a manner that protects current and future generations."

Scientists, politicians, and activists from 10 countries will convene in Budapest to lay the groundwork for a series of high-profile international hearings in 2010 across the US, Europe, and Russia. In addition to testimony from scientific, political, and advocacy communities, the hearings will also give voice to individuals who have been directly affected by and involved with the nuclear industry.

As Alexander Nikitin stated, "The nuclear industry did not take proper actions after Chernobyl and other nuclear catastrophes. It did not clean or protect the affected areas and people. Once more, nuclear engineering hopes to undertake new risky projects, and we must prevent these from happening."

The testimony from these hearing will form the basis of briefings provided by Global Nuclear Legacy Project partners for developed and developing nations that are considering nuclear energy and weapons programs.

The Alliance for Nuclear Accountability, a national grassroots network addressing issues of nuclear weapons production and cleanup is a co-sponsor of the project. Director Susan Gordon says, "Countries engaged in - or considering - nuclear programs should examine all the outcomes they face. Communities across the United States, Russia, and elsewhere continue to suffer environmental and health effects from the production of nuclear weapons and unsafe waste disposal practices."

Russian nuclear contamination is also considered an environmental crisis, with large areas of land permanently off-limits for habitation due to radiological contamination. Russia continues to enthusiastically embrace nuclear development and has made little to no meaningful progress in cleanup of their highly-contaminated facilities. Natalia Mironova, Director for Movement for Nuclear Safety in Chelyabinsk, Russian, embraced the idea of a mutual cooperation that would connect, unite and activate groups around the northern hemisphere to address the nuclear legacy crisis.

Facts at a glance:

Countries involved: US, Russia, Austria, France, Finland, Germany, Norway, Denmark, Great Britain, Hungary

US participants from: Washington State, Idaho, New Mexico, Massachusetts, South Carolina, Maryland, and Washington, DC.

Russian Participants from: Moscow, St. Petersburg, Chelyabinsk, Tomsk, and other parts of Siberia.