

To the President of the Russian Federation
Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin

Oslo, 07.06.2007

Dear Mr. President,

We consider it necessary to bring to your attention information about the situation that has come to pas with the storage of spent nuclear fuel (SNF) at Andreyeva Bay located on the Kola Peninsula 100 kilometres from Murmansk and 45 kilometres from the Russia-Norwegian border.

An emergency situation has developed with the aged storage facilities for SNF at Andreyeva Bay, which in the opinion of scientists, could lead to a spontaneous nuclear chain reaction. The storage facility holds some 32 tons of SNF, which contains 22,000 spent nuclear fuel assemblies. According to research carried out by scientists, these spent nuclear fuel assemblies, which have been kept in alarming conditions for about 25 years, are degrading, decaying, and nuclear fuel in the form of small particles create in the water in which the assemblies are stored a homogenous mix in which, under certain circumstances, could cause a spontaneous nuclear chain reaction.


According to Rosatom estimates, and uncontrolled chain reaction, the maximum effective radiation does expected to hit the area's population at the boundary of the of the sanitary protection zone of 100 metres – in the worst imaginable weather conditions taken into account – will not exceed 40 microsieverts in the first year after the accident. This dose is two times as high as the acceptable contamination level.

In Bellona's opinion, these estimates are impossibly optimistic because there is no guarantee that an explosion in one storage compartment will not trigger an explosion in a neighbouring compartments, which could result in 20 million Curies worth of fallout released into the environment, contaminating both huge sections of the territory Russia and surrounding states, including Norway.

According to Rosatom plans, work will be carried out to remove the SNF. This project will be carried out over the next 15 years, which in Bellona's opinion is completely unacceptable.

The crisis condition of the storage facility and the SNF stored there demands urgent measures aimed at liquidating the emergency situation, correcting plans and deadlines for removing the SNF and the application of effective technology.

Dear Mr. President, we are turning to you, the highest ranking official in the Russian government, in accordance with the Federal Law "On the use of atomic energy," to decide on questions of caution and liquidation of the consequences of emergency situations during the use of nuclear energy, and to adopt necessary measures for the liquidation of emergency situations concerning spent nuclear fuel at Andreyeva Bay.

	<p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Frederic Hauge President of the Bellona Foundation</p>
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