

**On The 20th Anniversary of Chernobyl:
A Call to Reform the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Mandate
And End the Nuclear Age**

We are writing to express our increasing concern over the conflicting and outdated mandate of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

On one hand, this UN Agency is tasked with halting the spread of nuclear weapons and providing technical assistance to support nuclear disarmament processes, which are urgently relevant and appropriate tasks for a UN Agency. At the same time, however, the IAEA's mandate also encompasses the promotion of nuclear power, which generates the very materials used in the manufactory of nuclear weapons. The current Iranian nuclear crisis, which raises serious concerns within the international community, is a timely reminder of the contradictory remit of the IAEA, which has proved impotent in preventing the conversion of other "peaceful" nuclear programmes into weapon manufacture in countries such as India, Pakistan and North Korea.

We believe that, on the 20th anniversary of the Chernobyl disaster, the time has come to reform IAEA mandate to withdraw its promotion of this dangerous and destabilising technology. Nuclear power is no longer necessary: We now have numerous renewable technologies available to guarantee the right to safe, clean and cheap energy. The Agency should therefore abandon its inappropriate dual role of both nuclear salesman and referee of a commercial industry that creates the world's most expensive form of electricity with a radioactive legacy that lasts for hundreds of thousands of years.

Increasing the share of nuclear power only exacerbates the already too great risk of nuclear weapons proliferation. The IAEA now cannot reconcile its peace and disarmament role with the simultaneous promotion of a technology that jeopardizes these very efforts. Nuclear power is a technology of the past, and it poses unacceptable risks to the future of life on this planet.

The IAEA itself recently conducted a public opinion poll, which delivered a strong message: the majority of people across 18 countries oppose the expansion of the nuclear power industry.¹ We call on Director General ElBaradei and Secretary-General Kofi Annan to propose amendments to the IAEA statute at the forthcoming IAEA Board of Governors and General Conference so that this United Nations Agency orientates itself to its rightful role in fostering increased international peace and security without promoting nuclear technology.

¹ http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Reports/gponi_report2005.pdf

Signatories:

Former Belgian Minister of Environment, Ms. Magda Alvoet



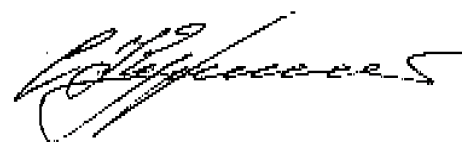
Former Belarusian Minister of Environment, Mr. Anatolii Dorofeev



Former Italian Minister of Environment, Mr. Edo Ronchi



Former Ukrainian Minister of Environment and Natural Resources, Mr. Sergiy Kurykin



Former Czech Minister of Environment, Mr. Ivan Dejmál



Former Russian Minister of Environment, Mr. Victor Danilov-Danilian



Former Danish Environment and Energy Minister, Mr. Svend Auken



Former Finish Minister of Environment and Development Cooperation, Ms. Satu Hassi

Former French Minister of Environment and Regional Planning, Ms. Dominique Voynet

Former British Minister of Environment, Mr. Michael Meacher MP