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3 January 2007

The prevention of the removal of radioactive metal from the Chernobyl zone

Motion for a resolution
presented by Mr Grachev and others

This motion has not been discussed in the Assembly and commits only the members who have signed it

The members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe express their concern over the circulation of the Ukrainian metal production manufactured with the use of radioactive metal from the alienation zone of the Chernobyl nuclear power station and propose that it be commissioned to prepare a report on the measures aimed at the protection of the European Union market from the metal production with a higher background radiation from Ukraine.

1. At present, there is 1 million tons of scrap metal with a total activity of 1 million curie concentrated in the alienation zone of the Chernobyl nuclear power station. About another 1 million tons of radioactive metal has been involved in the economic circulation by Ukrainian metallurgists in the recent years. Today, radioactive metal is being actively utilised, which is authorised by Ukrainian state bodies, it is being supplied to the Ukrainian metallurgical plants, and it is being used to manufacture metal production of general purpose. The Ukrainian metal production of general purpose, particularly construction iron, manufactured with the use of radioactive scrap metal from the alienation zone of the Chernobyl nuclear power station represents a real threat to the European Union population in case such production is supplied from Ukraine. It may seriously threaten the life and health of the population of both Ukraine and EU countries – the biggest exporters of Ukrainian metal.

2. Taking also into consideration that even a brief contact of a human with radiation leads to the development of oncological diseases, diseases of endocrine and reproduction systems, as well as heart, kidney, respiratory apparatus pathologies, the use of radioactive metal from the zone of the Chernobyl nuclear power station must be excluded. All the more that, according to the assessments of radiologists, the leveling of background radiation in Chernobyl to the state safe for the human health will occur not earlier than in 300 years.

3. In 2006 the export volume of Ukrainian metal has amounted to 21 million tons. At the same time, there has been an increase in the number of cases of radioactive materials disclosure and incidents related to the contamination of processing metal by a radioactive material at the Ukrainian metallurgical plants and the customs posts of scrap metal and metal production admission in various countries.

4. Taking into account that the appearance of radioactive materials in the European market may have a serious negative impact on people's health, the environment and the security of EU citizens, we propose that recommendations on the prevention of the penetration of radioactive metal production of Ukrainian origin into EU countries be produced. This package of documents must consider the draft recommendations on monitoring and response procedures for radioactive scrap metal which was developed by the Geneva Expert Group with the participation of the UN European Economic Commission, the IAEA, the European Commission, the Bureau of International Recycling (BIR) and the UN Institute for training and research (UNITAR)

Signed (see overleaf)

Signed ¹:

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¹ SOC: Socialist Group
EPP/CD: Group of the European People's Party
ALDE: Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe
EDG: European Democratic Group
UEL: Group of the Unified European Left
NR: not registered in a group