

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



Briefing for Commissioner [REDACTED] visit to Belarus
Meeting with Belarus Prime Minister – [REDACTED]
Minsk, 18 February 2019

Scene setter

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Speaking points :

EU-Belarus relations

- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- [REDACTED]
- **Nuclear safety** is a key priority for the EU and its MS. EU welcomes that the **National Action Plan** for implementation of the stress test peer review recommendations has been submitted to the Government and encourages **its swift submission to ENSREG for review.**

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On Espoo decision

The EU position is that the findings of the Implementation Committee were well grounded and that the decision was procedurally valid. Regret that no consensus was found with Belarus on this decision. Call on Belarus to respect the decision and follow up its findings, in particular the post project cooperation with Lithuania.

[REDACTED]

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neighbouring countries. Since 2011, the EU is supporting the Belarusian nuclear regulatory authority through the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation (INSC) to align on the EU acquis for nuclear safety. The Commission could explore the possibility of this programme to support capacity building of the regulatory authority, in the context of the monitoring of the implementation of the stress tests recommendations.

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Background

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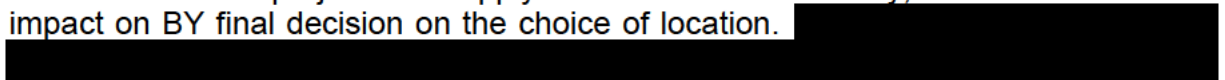
[REDACTED]


Belarus cooperated well with the ENSREG (European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group) on the Stress Test Peer Review that took place in March/April 2018. The peer review report, published in July 2018, overall confirms the adequacy of nuclear safety features but makes recommendations requiring thorough follow up and continued implementation measures. **The EU expects that the recommendations of the Stress Test Peer Review will be duly implemented.** In the EU-Belarus Coordination Group, that took place on 12-13 December 2018, Belarus side stressed that it expected to be treated in the same way as the EU MSs regarding follow-up to stress test peer review, and indicated its intention to continue

cooperation with ENSREG and to implement the stress test peer review recommendations. It, however, highlighted that the nuclear power plant is planned to be commissioned at the end of 2019 and that it was impossible to implement all peer review recommendations before the commissioning of the NPP. In February, the Nuclear and Radiation Safety Department of the Belarusian Emergencies Ministry (Gosatomnadzor) drafted and submitted the **National Action Plan for the implementation of the stress test recommendations** to the government for scrutiny. The plan was agreed with interested government agencies and organizations. The next important step is that Belarus **submits** the National Action Plan to **ENSREG** for review.



The recent (7 February 2019) decision of the **Espoo Convention** Implementation Committee acknowledged that Belarus had taken all required procedural steps to reach the final decision concerning the NPP, but found that Belarus had in its environmental impact assessment documentation provided **insufficient information on the alternative sites**. The non-compliance decision was a rather limited caution on the procedure. Also (para 15 of) the decision, only urges BY to ensure – in decision on future investment projects - to apply the Convention correctly, so there is no direct impact on BY final decision on the choice of location.



 Belarus considers that the decision was both factually and procedurally flawed and sought to present it as a discriminatory application of the Convention, “an anti-Belarusian position taken by the EU to please Lithuania” according to an MFA statement at the end of the meeting.

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