

DELEGATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNION TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Author: [REDACTED]

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Classification: LIMITED

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: RUSSIAN FEDERATION – Videoconference with [REDACTED] President of Rosatom's "International Network"

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Summary:

During the videoconference with the Delegation on 19 March, Rosatom was obviously keen to demonstrate its good intentions to the EU. It confirmed its support to Belarus' implementation of the stress test recommendations for the Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) under construction in Ostrovets [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] stressing about Ostrovets that the issue is now "on the right track" after a successful ENSREG/European Commission visit to Minsk on 9-10 March 2020.

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Detail:

[REDACTED]

NPP in Ostrovets/stress tests

The EU side recalled that nuclear safety is a priority and that the EU is striving to ensure that the highest safety standards are followed, both in and outside of the EU - particularly in the EU's immediate neighbourhood. It therefore asked Rosatom to encourage Belarus to continue cooperating with the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) and fully implement the stress test recommendations, including a peer review of the National Action Plan.

Mr Titov believes that the issue is now “on the right track”. Mr. Titov reassured that Rosatom is willing to assist the EU on the issue of nuclear safety vis-à-vis Belarus. Rosatom is fully aware of the EU's concerns, in particular as the issue had been raised in a meeting between Vice-President Sefcovic and Russia's energy minister Novak in September, following which Rosatom would have continuously worked on encouraging Belarus to improve safety and for a rapprochement between Belarus and the EU. Rosatom confirmed that what they heard from the Belarusian side after the **ENSREG/European Commission visit to Minsk on 9-10 March 2020 seemed to indicate that the visit had indeed been useful and fruitful.** Things are overall moving in the right direction, in contrast to Belarus' “dramatic silence” over the previous years.

But Mr Titov also took the care of managing expectations by recalling that even if the NPP is a Rosatom model, **Rosatom's influence is limited by** not just Belarus being an independent State but also, importantly, **the currently relatively poor state of Belarus-Russia relations**

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