

CHORNOBYL +20 REMEMBRANCE FOR THE FUTURE



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Contact: Tetyana Murza, Ecoclub

Mobile: +380 97 5952346;

Office: +380 44 483-2961

tanyam@nirs.org;

More speakers & details announced for the conference "*Chornobyl+20: Remembrance for the Future*", April 23-25

Organizers of the Chornobyl+20: Remembrance for the Future conference today released the names of more confirmed speakers, and new details about this international event to be held at the House of the Teacher in Kyiv, Ukraine, April 23-25, 2006.

Among the confirmed plenary speakers announced today are:

- long-time environmentalist and founder of Earth Day, *Denis Hayes*
- *Renate Künast*, floor leader of Alliance 90/The Greens in the German Parliament;
- *Yu Jie* of Greenpeace China;
- *Prof. Dimitry Hrodzinsky* – National Commission on the Radioactive Protection of the People of Ukraine

Workshop leaders and speakers announced today include:

- well-known Russian whistleblower *Alexander Nikitin*;
- founder of Ireland's Chernobyl Children's Project International *Adi Roche*;
- *Ed Lyman*, senior staff scientist for Union of Concerned Scientists, U.S.;
- *Mashile Phalane* of Earthlife South Africa;
- *Steve Thomas*, of the University of Greenwich, United Kingdom;
- *Anna Golubovska-Onisimova* – President, Mama 86, Ukraine
- *Kevin Kamps*, Nuclear Information and Resource Service, U.S.;
- *Prof. Keith Baverstock*, Department of Environmental Sciences, University of Kuopio, Finland

A full list of speakers can be found at the conference website, www.ch20.org. More speakers will be announced in coming weeks.

Visit to the Chernobyl reactor site

Organizers also announced an optional visit to the Chernobyl reactor site on April 22. Conference participants wishing to go on this tour should register for it on the conference website. Also on April 22, an Earth Day/Chernobyl+20 event will be held in Kyiv's famed Independence Square, as Ukrainian grassroots groups converge on Kyiv following an energy tour of the country in support of a new sustainable energy policy for Ukraine.

Aim of the conference

The conference is intended as a clear counterpoint to the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) meeting in Minsk, Belarus in April and an "official" conference in Kyiv April 24-26. At both events, the IAEA is expected to continue its efforts to downplay the consequences and lessons of the Chernobyl disaster to further its agenda of promoting new nuclear power construction. By contrast, the conference will expose the real and lasting effects of Chernobyl, and will seek to point the way to a safe, clean, plentiful energy future.

BACKGROUND—NUCLEAR POWER TODAY

Public opposition to nuclear power skyrocketed across the globe following the April 26, 1986 Chernobyl reactor accident. In 1973, U.S. President Richard Nixon had confidently predicted 1,000 operating reactors in the U.S. alone by 2000. Instead, because of Chernobyl and nuclear power's ongoing safety, waste and economic problems, only 440 were operating worldwide by that year, and none were under construction in North America or Western Europe. That year ended with nuclear power being excluded from eligibility for Clean Development Mechanism credits under the Kyoto Protocol.

Just six years later, the nuclear power industry is actively seeking a resurgence, based largely on its alleged ability to alleviate the growing global climate crisis. 11 new reactors have been proposed for Ukraine alone; 12 new reactors have been publicly suggested in the U.S.; a new reactor is under construction in Finland; India, China, Bulgaria, Russia and other countries are building or actively considering building new reactors.

Yet, nuclear power has not solved—and cannot solve what is inherent in the technology—its basic underlying drawbacks. It remains uniquely dangerous, extremely expensive, and no nation in the world has achieved the ability to isolate lethal, long-lived radioactive waste from the environment. The Chernobyl+20 conference will examine all of these issues in detail, along with issues surrounding nuclear proliferation and global energy equity, among other topics.

Moreover, nuclear power is unsuited for a role in addressing climate change. Embarking on a nuclear construction program sufficient to achieve even modest carbon emissions reductions would require a new reactor going on-line every two weeks for the next 40-50 years—an unachievable goal and one too late to make a meaningful impact. Such a program would cost trillions of dollars; lead to greatly increased nuclear proliferation and safety concerns; establish 1,000 or more new potential terrorist targets of mass destruction across the world; require development of dozens of new high-level radioactive waste sites when the world has been unable to build even one; and squander the resources necessary to implement the sustainable energy technologies that will have the greatest impact on reducing carbon emissions and addressing the climate crisis.

The choice is stark: the world can have nuclear power, or it can address climate change. The world cannot do both.

Note: media wishing to obtain credentials to cover the conference should contact Tetyana Murza at +380 97 5952346; +380 44 483-2961; tanyam@nirs.org.