

## Ukraine's Nuclear Regulator Issues License Permit to Process and Load Used Fuel from Chernobyl's Shuttered Reactors into Holtec Supplied Dry Storage Technology

### A Red-Letter Day in the History of Nuclear Energy

On September 7, 2020, State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine (SNRIU) issued the License Permit to Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant (ChNPP), the Owner, to start commissioning the Chernobyl Interim Spent Nuclear Fuel Storage Facility (ISF-2) which, upon loading, will be the world's largest dry storage installation.

Handover of the License Permit occurred in a small ceremony presided by the Regulatory Authority (SNRIU) Chairman Mr. Grigoriy Plachkov and was attended by Mr. Bogdan Borukhovskiy, Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Ukraine, Mr. Sergiy Kalashnik, Head of the State Agency of Ukraine on Exclusion Zone Management (SAUEZM), as well as representatives of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), ChNPP and Holtec [see articles [here](#) and [here](#)]. Holtec had handed over the complex to the Owner in December 2019. The License Permit was issued on September 7, 2020 after the Owner completed the last round of confirmatory component and integral effects tests.



*Participants of the License Permit Handover Ceremony Held on September 07, 2020 at SNRIU  
Left to Right: A. Pliatsko, SAUEZM; O. Shust, Ministry of Ecology; M. Verbylo, SAUEZM; S. Kalashnik, SAUEZM;  
B. Borukhovskiy, Ministry of Ecology; G. Plachkov, SNRIU; S. Tarakanov, Holtec Ukraine;  
R. Awan, Holtec International; O. Grygorash, SNRIU; V. Peskov, ChNPP*



*Grigoriy Plachkov, SNRIU Chairman*

Speaking at the ceremony, Chairman Grigoriy Plachkov captured the spirit of the moment stating, "This is an important and long-awaited event. The transfer of ChNPP Spent Nuclear Fuel to a long-term safe dry storage at ISF-2 over the next 10 years is one of key milestones in the transformation of the Chernobyl NPP into an ecologically safe system."

"This major milestone has been achieved by the hard work and diligent joint efforts of ChNPP, Holtec and its contractors, SNRIU, SSTC, NRS and other involved parties over the past many years. Special thanks to the EBRD for the support provided to this project along a difficult path," said Mr. Volodymyr Peskov, ChNPP Acting General Director.



*Volodymyr Peskov,  
ChNPP Acting  
General Director*

"Providing safe and secure storage for spent fuel is one of the most pressing nuclear safety challenges at the Chernobyl site. The start of hot testing at the new storage facility is therefore a major milestone. It is credit to the hard work of ChNPP and Holtec in overcoming many technical challenges as well as to the support of the donors to the Nuclear Safety Account. It is now critically important that this nuclear legacy is addressed in a timely and safe manner," said Mr. Balthasar Lindauer, Director, Nuclear Safety Department, EBRD.

Unrestricted loading of dry storage systems will begin shortly after making the final "hot" commissioning tests which begin on September 9, 2020. The project entails dismembering of Chernobyl's 21,000-plus fuel assemblies into three parts (two fuel bundles and an activated connecting rod) in a purpose-built hot cell (also world's largest) and packaging them in *double walled transportable canisters* (first introduced by Holtec in Ukraine) and placing them into dry storage.

We thank the Assembly of Donors, consisting of the governments of Belgium, Canada, Denmark, European Union, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America who provided the financial support and the Fund Administrator, EBRD, for their steadfast support to bring this important and critical project to this final stage.

"Thanks to the unrelenting effort of our people and support of our Ukrainian contractors, what many considered to be impossible has been rendered possible. To the facility Owner's staff who will now safely operate this complex facility, I wish to re-affirm that Holtec will assist you if the need arises. I am sure the Donors and EBRD will exhibit a similarly supportive posture," said Holtec's executive in charge of Ukraine operations, Vice President Riaz Awan.



*Riaz Awan, Vice  
President of Ukraine  
Operations*

Chornobyl is the world's most complex dry storage project with numerous unique aspects; the use of *double wall canisters* to render any risk of leakage utterly non-credible, and the deployment of a *forced gas dehydrator* to extract the last trace of entrained moisture from the fuel for guaranteed in-storage safety, are among the many innovative technologies that were deployed by Holtec to overcome the challenges that had stymied the project until 2011 when Holtec took over the project and successfully handed over the complex to the Owner in December 2019.



*Left to Right: Sergiy Tarakanov, General Director Holtec Ukraine; Grigoriy Plachkov, SNRIU Chairman; Volodymyr Peskov, ChNPP Acting General Director; Riaz Awan, Vice President of Ukraine Operations*