

## **An Ominous Threat to the Growth of Clean Energy Posed by Russia's Continuing Atrocities in Ukraine**

From: Dr. Kris Singh, CEO, Holtec International

I believe humankind should view Mr. Putin's military occupation of Zaporizhzhia nuclear plant in southeast Ukraine and his probing missiles launched at the South Ukraine nuclear plant site as a serious blow to humanity's clean energy future. Nuclear plants are not designed (and cannot be designed) to withstand the assault of heavy artillery. By setting the precedence of using a nuclear plant as a military target to terrorize a whole region, Mr. Putin has devised and normalized a new horrendous instrument of war that a future rogue state like his own would feel uninhibited to employ against its neighbor it does not like. Russia's own border has a number of small and middling states, from Georgia and Moldova in the south to the Baltics and Finland in the north. Putin's weaponizing of Ukraine's nuclear plants begs the question how these peaceful countries on Russia's periphery would build clean energy producing nuclear plants on their territory within the range of Russia's artillery. Exposed to such vulnerability, would the capital markets take the risk of funding the construction of such plants vulnerable to terror? Would the nuclear plants, sitting ducks to an aggressor's blackmail, be insurable? In a world simmering with scores of border disputes amongst neighboring countries, construction of new clean energy-producing nuclear plants on whom the future of decarbonization of our planet's environment substantially rests, will be imperiled. The nascent rise of nuclear, widely celebrated around the world, would be severely stunted putting a huge dent in humankind's decarbonization aspirations.

While Russia's actions most directly threaten Ukraine and central Europe from the Baltic to the Black Sea, its military use of a nuclear power plant for battlefield advantage is a first in warfare, and a precedent that weakens principles undermining the security of all 430-plus nuclear power reactors operating in more than 30 countries worldwide.

This clear and present risk to humanity's welfare must be firmly countered by the free world. Strong actions must be taken to stop Russia's brazen use of nuclear plants as a pawn in Putin's evil machinations in Ukraine and deter future misadventure by him and other potentates against their neighbors elsewhere.

In this matter, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) bears a special responsibility to lead the way to deal with the growing mortal threat to the rise of nuclear energy. It can begin by bringing together the member states to agree to a set of binding resolutions that make any attempt to interfere with peaceful generation of nuclear energy punishable by expulsion of the aggressor state from the organization. Firm steps must be taken to suspend implementation of all international research projects and programs, as well as the transfer of technologies involving Russia, especially those implemented under the IAEA and WANO.



Having failed to subdue Ukraine’s armed forces, Russia now rains missiles on the country’s energy infrastructure in a despicable attempt to break the will of Ukrainian people (which includes our own company’s employees) who are united in preserving their freedom. Their numbers include our Vice President of our Ukraine Operation centers, an American expat, who reflecting the spirit of his Ukrainian friends and colleagues, chooses to reside in Kyiv in solidarity with the Ukrainian people despite the frequent power outages and daily privations of life.

Putin’s attempt to shiver the Ukrainian people into submission in the dead of winter is a heinous crime by any measure of civilized behavior. His barbarity calls for global outrage and strong retaliatory action. It is incumbent on international bodies such as the United Nations General Assembly, the IAEA, to take the lead by suspending Russia from the UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, and its various agencies without delay. It is time to declare Russia a “Terrorist State” for all its war crimes, atrocities, and barbaric brutality in Ukraine and endangering welfare, health, and safety of hundreds of millions of people.

The time to act is here and now. Kremlin’s criminal attempts to destroy Ukraine’s energy infrastructure and continuing military threat to Zaporizhzhia are not Ukraine’s problem, they are a menace to human civilization; the world will pay a steep price if it looks the other way and fails to take action.

Very truly yours,

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