

# STATEMENT OF THE SECOND MEETING OF THE UNITED NATIONS CHERNOBYL FORUM

held 10–11 March 2004

at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Headquarters, Vienna

This meeting was held one year after the establishment in February 2003 of the UN Chernobyl Forum on the initiative of the IAEA and in co-operation with FAO, UN-OCHA, UNDP, UNEP, UNSCEAR, WHO and The World Bank, as well as the competent authorities of Belarus, the Russian Federation and Ukraine. The Chernobyl Forum was established with a view to contributing to the implementation of the new UN strategy launched in 2002 on the *Human Consequences of the Chernobyl Nuclear Accident – A Strategy for Recovery*.

The Second Meeting's main objectives were to monitor the Forum's operations during 2003 and to define the work plan for 2004–2006. The meeting was attended by all of the parties who initially established the Forum, except for UN-OCHA from which apologies were received because of the representative's illness. An observer from Germany also attended. The meeting was chaired by Dr. B. Bennett, Chairman of the Radiation Effects Research Foundation, Hiroshima, Japan. The complete list of meeting participants is attached (Annex 1).

The meeting discussed the following items:

- Reports from the Forum's expert groups "Environment" (EGE) and "Health" (EGH);
- Environmental and health consequences of the Chernobyl accident: National remediation and health care programmes;
- Planning for the Chernobyl Forum activities in 2004–2006, including the public Chernobyl Forum conference;
- Strategy for dissemination of the Forum findings and recommendations.

After detailed discussion of the above agenda items, the meeting came to the following conclusions:

- To continue the work of the Forum's EGE and EGH and complete their reports by the end of 2004.
- To consider the expert groups' reports at the third UN Chernobyl Forum Meeting early in 2005. The draft reports should be submitted to Forum participants at least 2 months prior to the meeting.
- To prepare a shortened version (digest) of the Forum report readable for the educated public by the third UN Chernobyl Forum Meeting for its discussion thereof.
- To organize the public conference of the Chernobyl Forum in September 2005 aiming at informing governments and the general public about Forum's findings and recommendations.

- To widely disseminate the Forum’s findings and recommendations during 2005–2006 and afterwards through:
  - UN organizations, national governmental bodies and non-governmental organizations;
  - International Chernobyl Research and Information Network (ICRIN);
  - Mass media, including international and national TV programmes;
  - Special lectures/presentations for the populations of the affected regions;
  - IAEA WorldAtom, Chernobyl Website of the UN, and a special website to be created on the Forum.
- To publish the full scientific Forum Report in 2006 both in English and Russian.
- To request IAEA and WHO Secretariats to provide for full-scale regular funding necessary to complete the Forum activities.
- To request IAEA Secretariat to organize a special meeting of the EGE for consideration of the environmental aspects of the Shelter decommissioning and management of radioactive waste originating from the Chernobyl accident.
- To organize a special meeting aiming to discuss the Forum and ICRIN co-operation.
- To accept the draft Work Plan of the UN Chernobyl Forum for 2004–2006 (see Annex 2).

Given that the time frame for preparation of the Public Chernobyl Forum is short, these preparations should begin as soon as possible. Sponsorship of this conference should be provided by the UN organizations, national governments participating in the Forum and other interested organizations. The programme of the Public Chernobyl Forum should include detailed discussion on both environmental and health issues considered by the Forum’s Expert Groups, as well as social and economic issues linked to the accident consequences and their remediation programmes including practical examples.

The prime expectation from the UN Chernobyl Forum is that it will be able to issue authoritative statements and recommendations that will contribute to improvement of public understanding of the accident consequences. The Forum’s reports are aimed to assist the affected countries in optimizing their activities related to remediation of land contaminated with long-lived radionuclides and in providing health care to people affected by the accident. The current Forum activities are well supported by the governments and international organizations involved.