



Canada Playing Key Role in Chornobyl Recovery

The Canadian government, through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), has committed about \$38 million to projects related to Chornobyl, which represents over 20% of the \$178 million overall program commitments for Ukraine.

With the aid of a grant from CIDA and donations from Rotary Clubs and private companies, Help Us Help the Children has shipped 300 tonnes of medical supplies, infant food and clothing to 167 orphanages in Ukraine in the last three years.

Since its beginnings in 1992 as the Chornobyl's Children's Project, a medical training project called OSVITA (meaning 'enlightenment' in Ukrainian), has received \$3.48 million from CIDA to introduce modern techniques for the care of mothers and children in pediatric hospitals, including training for lab technicians to upgrade quality controls and accuracy of blood analysis and other medical tests.

CIDA has also contributed funds for: counselling centres for relocated families, mothers of children with birth defects, and teachers, who often serve as surrogate parents; medical equipment for hospitals treating children exposed to radiation; and a computerized cancer registry to track long-term health consequences of the Chornobyl accident. This was established by the University of Toronto's National Cancer Institute and Atomic Energy of Canada, which supplied 40 computers and software. The project will provide hard statistical data essential to accurately assess the impact of the radiation fallout.

In addition, in order to respond to an urgent, but more global need for medicines in Ukraine, CIDA has contributed \$6.6 million through the Canadian Red Cross Society for the delivery of medications and medical supplies to the elderly, expectant mothers, children and the disabled. Another \$4.5 million was given to UNICEF for an immunization program for children.

Other CIDA Projects include:

- Nuclear safety; closing down Chornobyl
- Coal
- Hydro
- Environmental - Dnipro River cleanup
- Nuclear fuel storage
- Geographical mapping system.

also spoke out in favour of an international treaty to ban nuclear tests.

Mr. Kostenko, who held a news conference in Kyiv on April 22, said one of the Moscow Summit's top achievements was the adoption of a separate resolution in the G-7 Memorandum on Nuclear Safety and Security regarding the sarcophagus over reactor No. 4 at the Chornobyl plant.

He underlined that the move to adopt the resolution - which states that the G-7 assumes responsibility to examine the problem of the sarcophagus - was unprecedented, because the document was drafted and ready to be signed before President Kuchma added the issue to the official document.

"A very important phrase has been incorporated to the final version of the document," noted Mr. Kostenko, who called the summit "a source of hope that will allow us to begin implementing solutions to the Chornobyl problem soon."

The 600-word declaration issued at the end of the summit states that nuclear safety is "an absolute priority" and that all nuclear materials must be kept secure.

Ukrainian officials attending the Moscow summit noted that French President Jacques Chirac was very supportive of Ukraine at the meetings. During the joint press conference with Russian President Yeltsin, it was the French leaders who told reporters that a feasibility study by European, Ukrainian, Russian and American experts would be financed by the West in order to assess what repairs will be necessary on the facility over the destroyed fourth reactor, which to this day contains almost 200 tons of nuclear fuel and waste products.

President Kuchma told Ukrainian media that Mr. Chirac took a very "pro-Ukrainian position," asking the right questions after President Kuchma's speech and immediately offering another \$50 million to promptly begin the study. It was because of Mr. Chirac's action that the issue of the sarcophagus was resolved quickly, he added.

The secretary of Ukraine's National Security Council, Volodymyr Horbulin, said the summit raised three main points: the monitoring of the security of nuclear material and continued cooperation in the field of nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament; negotiations on a total ban on nuclear tests, possibly by September; and the issue of closing the Chornobyl nuclear plant.

Foreign Minister Hennadiy Udoenko told Interfax-Ukraine that in the wake of the G-7 summit in Moscow, Ukraine's main objective in the implementation of the program to shut down Chornobyl is to draft a plan in order to fulfill the agreements reached.

When Ukraine receives funding from the West, this will now be channelled through the State Committee on Atomic Energy and the newly created Enerhokompania, a monopoly incorporating all five nuclear power plants in Ukraine.

Monies will be received from the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, which will fund the additional four reactors at the Rivne and Khmelnytsky plants being completed to substitute for the energy supply lost by the closure of the Chornobyl power plant. The World Bank will provide funding for the Starobeshiv thermal energy generating plant and for the reconstruction of one of the hydro-electric stations on the Dnipro River.

After the summit meeting, President Kuchma also conducted bilateral discussions with Canada's Prime Minister Jean Chrétien, President Chirac of France, Japanese Prime Minister Rotaro Hashimoto, Russian PM Viktor Chernomyrdin and Russian President Yeltsin.

INTERNATIONAL RESEARCH CENTRE ON NUCLEAR SAFETY AT SLAVUTYCH

To assist Ukraine in dealing with the social consequences of the shutdown of the Chornobyl plant, the U.S. and Ukraine agreed to create a research centre in the town which is currently home to the Chornobyl plant workers. Ukrainian Environment Minister Yuriy Kostenko and U.S. Assistant Secretary of State Terry Lash signed an agreement establishing a \$3 million Slavutych International Nuclear and Radiation Safety Research Centre. Centre on Nuclear Security. President Kuchma - who encouraged all interested parties at the G-7 Moscow Summit to take part in this project - said that this Centre will spur international cooperation in promoting nuclear safety.

