



## New Challenges and Nuclear Risks in the Baltic Region

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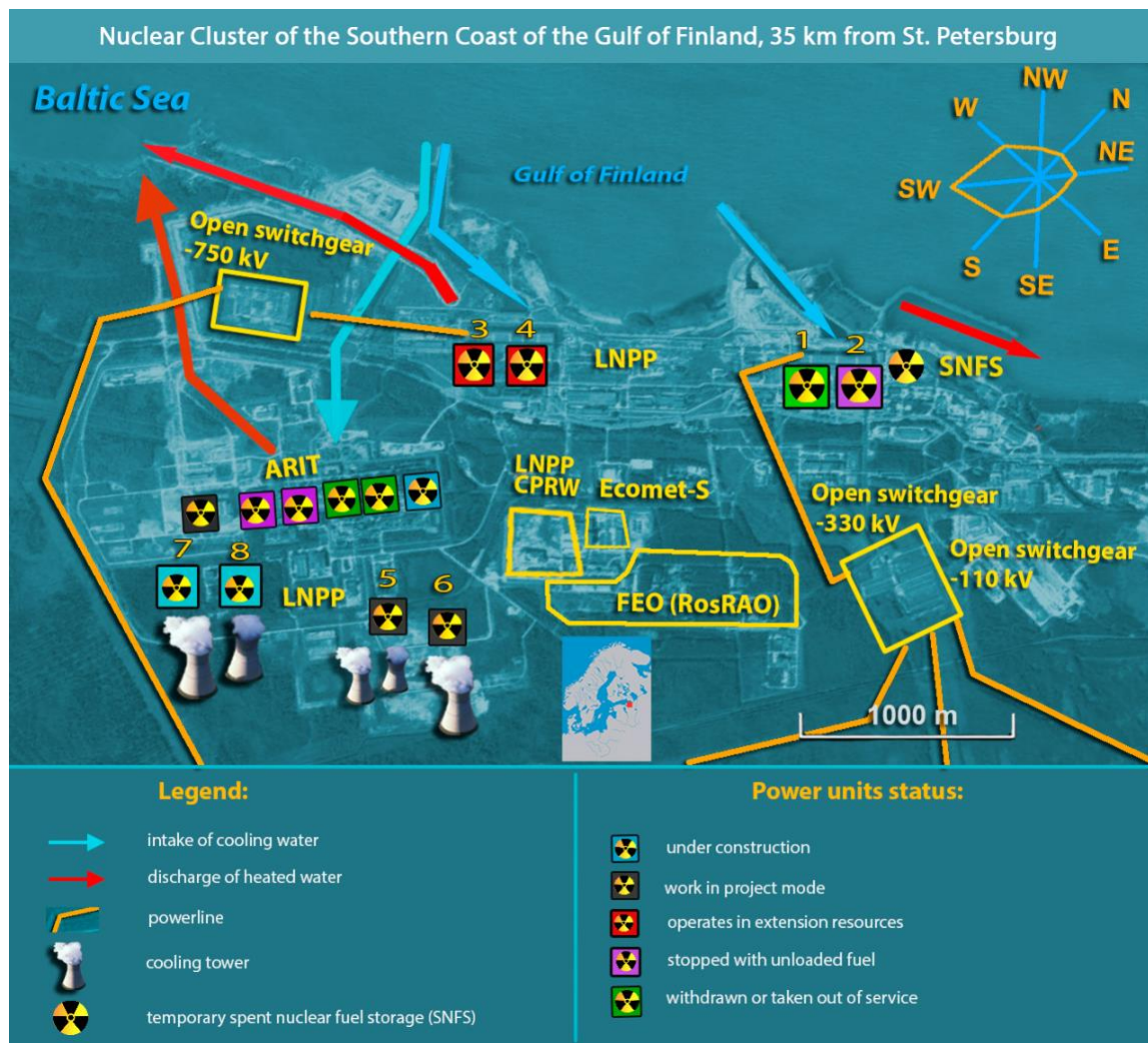
Dear participants of the seminar!

Thank you for the invitation and the chance to discuss our common security in the Baltic and Arctic regions.

I speak with you from the largest nuclear cluster in the Baltic Sea Region. It is located on the southern coast of the Gulf of Finland, 35 km from St. Petersburg, 70 km from the Estonian and 100 km from the Finnish borders.

There are 14 civilian and military nuclear reactors located here in different stages of life cycle. In addition, spent nuclear fuel rods equivalent to 24 Chernobyl-type reactors are temporarily stored at the Leningrad NPP.

Ecomet-S, the largest plant in Europe for the processing of radioactive metal and a temporary storage facility for radioactive waste, also operates here.



Picture 1. Russian nuclear cluster in the Baltic:

*LNPP (1 - 8) - power units of the Leningrad Nuclear Power Plant.*

*ARIT (1 - 6) - experimental military nuclear installations of Alexandrov Research Institute of Technology.*

*Ecomet-S - a plant for the processing of radioactive metal from all over Russia.*

*FEO (RosRAO) - Federal Environmental Operator - storage of radioactive waste.*

*LNPP CPRW - LNPP Complex for Processing Radioactive Waste.*

30 years ago, in 1992, the experts of the Academy of Sciences of Russia concluded that the ecological capacity of this area has been exhausted and did not recommend building new industrial facilities here.

The authorities ignored these recommendations.

The number of nuclear facilities on the southern shore of the Gulf of Finland has doubled. And this process continues now.

A month ago, construction of the 7th and 8th power units of the Leningrad NPP began. Two old LNPP reactors are planned to be operated not for 30, but for 50 years, and then decommissioned by 2059.

Thus, in the coming decades, the probability of accidents at the nuclear cluster in the Russian part of the Baltic will increase.

Decisions on Russian nuclear facilities are made in Moscow, about 1,000 km away. Neither the 7 million residents of St. Petersburg and the Leningrad region, nor residents of neighboring countries, participate in these decisions. At the same time Russia has signed the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context.

The security situation of nuclear facilities in the Baltic region has changed radically in recent months.

Recently, an air raid siren sounded in the nuclear city of Sosnovy Bor.

It was a training in case of war for the 2 million inhabitants of the Leningrad region.

I believe that this is also a signal for 95 million inhabitants of 9 countries of the Baltic region.



Picture 2. Baltic Arctic nuclear confrontation line of NATO and Russia

Politicians incapable of ensuring peace are preparing us for the opportunity to fight in the Baltic region, where 33 nuclear power units operate and tens of thousands of tons of radioactive waste are stored.

The line of confrontation between Russia and NATO has divided the Baltic region into two parts. Approximately two thirds of the nuclear reactors and radioactive waste are in NATO countries, and one third are Russia and Belarus.

The situation with the Zaporozhye nuclear power plant in Ukraine shows that the so-called "peaceful atom" is no longer peaceful.

Nuclear power plants have become a new type of weapon of mass destruction. These weapons are more dangerous than nuclear weapons. It has become an instrument of blackmail and a threat of radioactive contamination not only in the Baltic region, but also in the Northern hemisphere.

The half-life of the toxic Plutonium-239 is twenty-four thousand years. It was almost absent from the earth's crust 80 years ago. At present, at least 100 tons of Plutonium have been produced at the Baltic NPPs. This is a danger not only for us living now, but also for dozens and may be hundreds of future generations.

The idea of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons has failed.

All of Europe is mined with nuclear power plants!

In the context of the confrontation between Russia and NATO, decisions about a possible war in the Baltic will be made by politicians thousands of kilometers away from our region, and not by those who live here, including in Russia.

I think it is important to strengthen the role of Baltic stakeholders in shaping policy in the region. This requires the interaction of socially active groups of citizens, businesses and regional legislators from Baltic Russia and the NATO countries of the Baltic region.

#### **Some ideas for consideration:**

1. **A scientific report** is needed with an assessment of the state of ecosystems in the Baltic region and of changes in the event of the destruction of nuclear facilities by the military. The target group of residents and politicians of the Baltic region. Such a report is very important in Russia as well.
2. **It is necessary to restore opportunities for cooperation** between regional stakeholders, including Russian environmental and human rights NGOs, with partners in the Baltic region. This requires "counter-sanctions" to remove the double iron curtain for NGOs, both from Russia and from the countries of the Baltic region.
3. **Peace ministries in the Baltic region** are needed to promote a culture of peace in relations with neighboring countries.

Let's join hands, friends from all over the Baltic Sea!

We are neighbors, part of our common Baltic habitat and planet Earth!

We cannot be enemies.