

NGO Major Group Intervention

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Ladies and Gentlemen, Mr. Chairman,

I would like to share with you the results of NGO Major Group Consultations on CSD issues, organised by ANPED (The Nordic Alliance for Sustainability) in Moscow in February 2007.

Regarding the issue of land degradation and pollution we have defined 3 main challenges:

- contamination from obsolete pesticides storages,
- contamination from military and space activities (that is a problem of EECCA region),
- nuclear contamination.

The issue of obsolete pesticides is adequately addressed in the document, prepared by the Secretariat (ECE/AC.25/2008/3, par 75 and 84). However issue of nuclear contamination shall also be taken seriously. Radioactive substances are the most effective land polluters. You cannot remove them, there are no technologies for cleaning up the polluted area. The only think one can do – wait for some 24 000 years or more, depending of half-lifetime of the nuclei.

In par. 75 of the above mentioned document the problem of Chernobyl accident consequences such as radioactive land contamination is mentioned. Unfortunately, the Chernobyl contamination is still a big problem not only for Ukraine and Belarus, but for Russia and even to some of the EU countries.

Remembering Chernobyl we shall not forget other large scale accidents, such as Windscale accident, happened in the UK some 50 years ago and Kyshtym accident, which happened in USSR, at Urals in 1957.

Ladies and Gentlemen, people are still suffering from those and many other nuclear accidents. For example, inhabitants of village Muslumovo, Russia, are resettled only now, 50 years after the massive radioactivity leakage. For 50 years people have to live at heavy contaminated lands.

Unfortunately some nuclear power plants are still operating in the UN ECE region and create new risks and new pollution through ongoing emissions, small leakages, etc. I would like to remind you the recently published data of the German Cancer Register which prove that the leukaemia rate in the areas next to nuclear power plants is much higher then in nuclear-free areas.

Our recommendations concerning contaminated land management are the following:

- to establish an international policy on contaminated land management;
- to map and mark on site all the dangerous areas, incl. obsolete pesticide storages, nuclear contaminated areas, etc.
- to restrict any agricultural and other activity in those areas.

We need this policy and we call upon to CSD to work on that.