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**Greenpeace International
Non-Proliferation Update**

March 4, 2004

Why Does DOE Plan to Subject US Weapons Plutonium to Terrorist Threats In France?

The U.S. Department of Energy plans to export 150 kgs of weapons-grade plutonium to France, where it will be transported over land and be subjected to seriously lacking security standards. Contrary to presentations that only "rogues" pose proliferation problems, regular plutonium shipments in France are arguably the most vulnerable place in the entire world to those who would attack or seize such weapons-usable fissile material.

As part of DOE's plutonium disposition program, the proposed export of weapons plutonium could take place in late summer, if the Nuclear Regulatory Commission grants an export license, which Greenpeace International is challenging. In recent days, French authorities are quietly admitting that they can't defend their plutonium shipments yet DOE is pushing ahead with its export plan, which would involve sea shipment from the US to the French port of Cherbourg.

For more information on the threat posed by the shipments, go to
http://www.greenpeace.org/international_en/news/details?item_id=422957

You will find a link at the bottom of the above web page to the March 3 report on vulnerability of plutonium shipments in France and also a link to a video clip of plutonium transport trucks on a French highway. I can point you to another video clip if you have interest. There is also a link on the side to an October news release on DOE's plans to export weapons plutonium to France, where it would be handed over to French authorities and transported just as insecurely as French plutonium is now moved 1000 km across France - from the reprocessing factory at La Hague to the plutonium fuel (MOX) plant at Marcoule. Link to that news release can be found at:
http://www.greenpeace.org/international_en/press/release?item_id=326743

Thanks for your efforts to halt proliferation of nuclear weapons materials, support initiatives to close plutonium reprocessing plants in all countries and to have excess stocks managed as nuclear waste. Creation of a plutonium handling and processing infrastructure to make MOX fuel in the US and Russia will only increase plutonium proliferation risks. Congress must cut funding to this program and redirect funds to revive development of the proliferation-resistant "immobilization" of plutonium as waste, which can also be utilized world-wide with the massive stockpile of so-called civil plutonium.

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CHAIRMAN REC'D
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Greenpeace International news release

Study reveals risk of accident or terrorist attack on France's plutonium route

Paris, 3 March 2004 - Major failures in security arrangements for transports of weapons-usable plutonium across France pose an enormous environmental and health hazard, according to a study commissioned by Greenpeace International and released today. The study reveals that the Areva/Cogema (1) transports, which routinely pass through Paris and Lyon, are vulnerable to both severe traffic accidents and deliberate terrorist attack that could result in catastrophic plutonium contamination, affecting millions of people.

The study by independent nuclear engineering consultants Large & Associates (2) documents that, in case of serious road traffic accidents or terrorist attacks, the plutonium transport containers were found to be unable to resist fire temperatures and, particularly, fire durations. The fact that the transports are frequent (two trucks every 7-10 days), predictable (same route every week), and not well protected, renders them vulnerable to attack. Depending upon the severity of an incident, plutonium fall-out could affect hundreds of square kilometres and millions of people in a range of locations, including near the Palace of Versailles, across Paris and the outskirts of Lyon (3).

"A deliberate terrorist attack will seek to maximize the devastating effects, so all flasks in a single truck will be ruptured, followed by severe fire and long range dispersal and will release radioactive contamination. The plutonium fall-out plumes cover right across Paris - the health consequences for a severe incident in the Versailles tunnel must be considered unacceptable,(4)" said Dr John Large, author of the study.

Likewise, the shipments are also vulnerable to attack with the goal of seizing the plutonium oxide cargo stowed inside the lightly secured cargo containers placed on the truck chassis.

The effects of a severe accident or terrorist attack would be catastrophic requiring sheltering distances up to 110km from the site depending on the incident severity. By way of comparison the Eiffel Tower is only 15km from where the transports pass every week. The report also recommends a comprehensive assessment of the wider social and economic implications given the scale of disruption likely to occur to the French economy, public and tourism.

The dangers highlighted in the new Greenpeace study were confirmed March 2nd by a French Government appointed Commission. It concluded that there does not exist a strategy in France to deal with nuclear incidents - either accident or terrorist attack. On Tuesday, 2 March, the Director of France's Nuclear Safety Agency, Andre Lacoste, endorsed the findings of the 'Vrousos' Commission.(5)

"It is the height of irresponsibility by the French plutonium industry to persist in these transports when they are one of the world's most vulnerable targets for terrorist attack," said Shaun Burnie, of Greenpeace International. "This study starkly reveals that plutonium transports pose a threat to millions of people in Paris, Lyon and throughout France. The authorities would quite clearly be unable to cope - would they evacuate major cities or would they let people live in plutonium contaminated zones? It is a wholly unjustified and avoidable risk and must be stopped immediately," said Burnie.

For more than two years Greenpeace has researched the weekly transports of 300 kilograms of plutonium dioxide from la Hague in Normandy to Marcoule and Cadarache in Provence. Last February, Greenpeace France protested against one plutonium truck in Chalon. Activists have also distributed over 15,000 flyers with details of the transports to tourists travelling the main auto-route from Paris to Lyon.

In May 2003, the campaign launched a citizens inspection website which contains details of regular transports. In August, in direct response to information provided by Greenpeace on these transports, the French Government passed an "Arrete," or decree, which declared disclosure of information on nuclear materials an offence under national security provisions, violation of which was liable for 5-10 years imprisonment.

Following on President Bush's non-proliferation initiative of 11 February, Greenpeace believes those who are proliferating plutonium worldwide should be the focus of control, not those such as Greenpeace which are working to halt all accumulation and use of weapons-usable fissile materials.

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Copies of the study:

http://www.greenpeace.org/multimedia/download/1/424600/0/Large_report.pdf

Main findings of the study:

http://www.greenpeace.org/multimedia/download/1/424633/0/Large_report.pdf

French version of the study:

http://www.greenpeace.org/multimedia/download/1/424682/0/Large_report.pdf

NOAA Hysplit models, and background documentation, photos and maps, and video footage of the transports are available at the Greenpeace France web site: www.Stop-Plutonium.org and Greenpeace International web site stated above.

Notes to editor:

(1) Areva/Cogema - French state-owned nuclear company. (2) "Potential Radiological Impact And Consequences Arising From Incidents Involving A Consignment Of Plutonium Dioxide Under Transit >From Cogema la Hague To Marcoule/Cadarache" Large & Associates, March 2004, for Greenpeace International.

Large & Associates, Consulting Nuclear Engineers (UK) is headed by John Large who for two decades was a United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority researcher and who has given evidence on the UK nuclear industry to the Energy Committee of the House Commons, as well as consultancy to the Governments of Japan, Russia, Bulgaria; and has published widely on the risks and hazards of nuclear materials transportation and the vulnerability of the nuclear industry to terrorism. Recently (throughout 2001) John Large headed the team of nuclear and naval weaponry experts advising and supervising the world's first salvage of the Russian Federation nuclear powered submarine Kursk.

(3) Two sample locations analysed in the study are a) as the convoy passes round the southern suburbs of Paris, travelling eastwards on the A6 route where it passes through the cut and cover road tunnel on the A12 near Versailles (2.08E48.48N) about 20km southwest of the centre of Paris, and b) where the convoy passes to the east of Lyon on Route A7 in the locality where the road crosses the River Rhone (4.55E48.48N) about 10km to the east of the centre of Lyon.

(4) The estimated total release of plutonium ranges from 0.5kg up to 25kg, to a maximum of just one-tenth of the total amount of plutonium carried in each transport convoy. The so-called release fraction cited by Large & Associates derives from the U.S. Department of Energy's own calculations contained in recent environmental impact analysis, this is in stark contrast to the French regulators which assume a worst case scenario of 0.07g released. The fall-out patterns were calculated using the NOAA Hysplit model and plume rise prediction is by Hotspot. NOAA

HYSPLIT is the USD Air resources Laboratory air concentration and dispersive model and Hotspot is the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory predictive software for release plumes. The health effects are calculated using the European Commission developed COSYMA radioactive dispersion and health consequence modelling program. Hotspot is also used to provide a check on COSYMA.

(5) "Priority in terms of Radioprotection - conclusions for a better population protection against ionizing radiation," report for 'Vrousos Commission', March 2nd 2004, under authority of DGRSN, Director Andre Claude Lacoste.

For newly revealed terrorist threat in France, see article at:
<http://washingtontimes.com/upi-breaking/20040303-064924-2716r.htm>

CHAIRMAN DIAZ STAFF ROUTING

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TITLE: Faxed Document Fm Greenpeace International re "Why Does DOE Plan to Subject U.S. Weapons Plutonium to Terrorist Threat in France"

RECEIVED: March 5, 2004

	Name	Action/Information	Initials	Date
	Chairman Diaz			
/	Maria Lopez-Otin			
	Rick Croteau		<i>RC</i>	3.5.4
	Roger Davis			
	Pat Castleman			
	Nancy Fragoyannis			
	Gary Holahan			
	Chris Jackson			
	Diane Jackson			
	Brad Jones			
	Clare Kasputys			
	Robert McOsker			
2	Janet Schlueter			
	Vicki Bolling			
	Linda Herr			
	Kia Jackson			
	Administrative Assistant (Floater)		<i>CA</i>	3/5/04

Notes: *To SECY for info? yes per 3.5.4 Done/Carrie/3/5/04*

a= Information d= For upcoming Meeting
 b= Review & Highlight e= Let's discuss
 c= Review & Comment f= Prepare response

Copy Filed? Yes	No	Discard Routing Copy? Yes	No
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File Location: File in Int'l: France, Plutonium Shipments, and Terrorism