

STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR YURIY ISAKOV,
DEPUTY PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
AT THE UN SPECIAL EVENT, DEDICATED TO THE EIGHTEENTH
ANNIVERSARY OF THE ACCIDENT ON THE CHERNOBYL NUCLEAR POWER
PLANT

27 April, 2004, General Assembly Hall

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Eighteen years have passed since the accident on the Chernobyl nuclear power plant, but the international community still remembers the date of this major technological catastrophe of the twentieth century. Its consequences continue to affect human lives and environment of the concerned areas.

The Russian Federation lays special emphasis on activities aimed at a long-term social and economic rehabilitation of the population and the affected territories. Reconstruction and development of infrastructure, healthcare, education, municipal economy, housing and promotion of employment for people displaced from affected regions are in the focus of the State's attention in this field.

Eighteen years after the accident, health issues still remain of major importance in the most affected regions of the Chernobyl area, with Russia possessing two of them – regions of Bryansk and Kaluga. These territories will need an appropriate medical control and monitoring of population's health, first of all of women and children, for a long period of time. Recently adopted General Assembly resolution "Strengthening of international cooperation and coordination of efforts to study, mitigate and minimize the consequences of Chernobyl disaster" focuses on these "exceptional needs" of the affected countries.

No less important sphere of international cooperation on Chernobyl is scientific research, carried out to promote a comprehensive assessment of an actual situation with radiation in the affected areas and to decrease mental stress of population living there. Another important direction of research is study of radiological effects. Long term

efforts for supporting lifelong medical observation of the most contaminated and irradiated contingents are necessary.

The UN plays a key role in coordinating international cooperation on Chernobyl. In this regard, we especially appreciate efforts by OCHA and by its head Jan Egeland. We suppose that the UNDP Administrator Mark Malloch-Brown whose functions cover henceforth the coordination of Chernobyl issues will be in a position to push forward international cooperation on long term rehabilitation of the affected territories. We account that a good support in this matter will arise from Mr. Malloch-Brown's authority as Chairman of the UN Development Group.

And last, but not least. We consider today's event to be response to the General Assembly welcoming the decision of the Council of Heads of State of the Commonwealth of Independent States to proclaim 26th of April as the International Day Commemorating Victims of Radiation Accidents and Catastrophes and its invitation to observe this day. For us, this is a demonstration of solidarity with victims of the catastrophe continuing to be in need of attention and assistance from the international community. Pain and suffering of these people are reflected in hearts of many others throughout the world. Convincing evidence of this is the film "Chernobyl Heart" which was granted with this year's Academy Award and which we will be watching today. Special thanks to copyrights owners, whose generosity made possible today's demonstration. Allow me to express our sincere admiration to the director Mrs. Marian DeLeo and sincere gratitude for her brilliant talent and ability to share in sorrow.

Thank you.