
ARMENIA MUST SUBMIT NEW NUCLEAR REACTOR'S EIA REPORT TO NEIGHBORING STATES

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The new reactor in Armenia will be of the new generation 3+, but regardless of the technology to be used for the construction, the reactor is harmful to the environment of neighboring countries.

Adil Garibov, chairman of the National Nuclear Research Center under the Ministry of Communications and High Technologies of Azerbaijan, made the remark on January 23, when commenting on the harm of a new reactor planned to be built in Armenia.

He noted that according to the international convention, to carry out these works, Armenia must submit an environmental impact assessment (EIA) report of the reactors construction technology to all neighboring states.

This assessment should be conducted not by Armenia, but by an independent and certified company in this field or by international structures. Azerbaijan has not received such a document from Armenia, Garibov said.

The expert noted that France, which has reactors built on the most modern technologies, has moved to regulated activity in this area. The country stops the operation of most of its old reactors and intends to build new reactors based on fourth generation technology.

Garibov recalled that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has already adopted the decision to extend the work of the Metsamor nuclear power plant (NPP) in Armenia until 2026.

In accordance with the agreement of Armenia with Russias State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom, a new NPP with capacity of 1,600 megawatts will be built in Armenia until then.

Many questions about the status of the reactor planned to be constructed are not clarified. According to Rosatoms conditions, Russia will itself sell energy produced by the reactor. Most countries do not agree with this. For example, Belarus did not, Garibov said.

The expert added that despite the fact that the construction of the new reactor was scheduled to begin in 2016, the work has not started yet. Perhaps, the construction of the reactor will begin in 2019 and end in 8-10 years, Garibov noted.

The construction of the Metsamor NPP started in 1970. The plant was closed after a devastating earthquake of 1988 in the town of Spitak. However, in 1995, despite numerous protests of

international community, the Armenian government renewed the operation of the NPP.

A number of international experts have repeatedly urged that due to its deplorable state, the Armenian Metsamor NPP could repeat the fate of the Chernobyl NPP, thus threatening the lives of the Armenians and citizens of adjacent countries. The possible tragedy will also jeopardize the environmental state of the region. Moreover, its consequences will be felt in Europe and the Middle East.

It is noteworthy that while addressing the Council of Europe, Armenia undertook closure of the station, but has not fulfilled this commitment yet. Moreover, the European Union insisted on closing the NPP and offered 200 million Euro to Armenia. Despite this, the NPP is still functioning, since no alternative sources of energy exist in Armenia.

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