

New Russian nuclear power: "Risk for Europe"

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Oleg Bodrov, antinuclear activist Russian (right), accompanied by his lawyer Andrey Talevlin in front of the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg. Photo: Dominique Gutekunst

Russia set to export electricity to the European countries that reduce their nuclear program. Russian and Norwegian activists launch warning: "It is risky for the environment. '

"It is not possible to go on", says Oleg Bodrov. "Russia extends the life of its aging reactors of the Chernobyl-type and builds new nuclear reactors to export 50% of its production to the countries of Western Europe, who renounce nuclear, without complying with European safety standards. The risk of accidents is increasing."

This former nuclear physicist who was a research engineer to develop submarine nuclear reactors, has worked for twenty years for Green World / Zelenyj Mir, a Russian non-governmental organization for the defense of human rights and the environment.

With Tore Braend, Friends of the Earth Norway, he is making visits these days, around the European institutions in Brussels and Strasbourg to alert parliamentarians. "Russia is building eight new nuclear reactors in total, two in Belarus, near the western borders to the EU. The goal is to export electricity at low cost, using a process hazardous to safety and the environment. It is a boomerang effect that threatens the West and cancels their efforts to reduce the share of nuclear power, " they explained to Members of the European Parliament and to the DG Energy of the European Union. "Extending the life of old first generation reactors threatens the entire Baltic region, that is to say 90 million people in nine countries, but also throughout Europe, not to mention the contamination of fish and shellfish. '

These activists ask European countries not to import Russian power as the country "does not apply the rules of safety and environmental protection common in Europe." They demand that Russia ratifies international conventions, including the Espoo Convention on the environmental impact in a transboundary context and that of Aarhus Convention on access to information and public participation in decision making. "In Russia, the citizen has no voice. We have complained to the European Court of Human Rights. '

In Berlin, Oleg Bodrov asked parliamentarians that Germany refuse to participate in financing the construction of new reactors in Kaliningrad. Besides the risk of nuclear catastrophe, the protesters also fear serious radioactive pollution related to the storage of spent fuel in the Urals and Siberia: "For 20 years, more than 100 tons of nuclear waste from enrichment plants of uranium in England, France and Germany have passed through the Baltic Sea to the Urals and Siberia. At Mayak, near Chelyabinsk, waste is being deposited in lakes and rivers, contaminating vast territories. Consequences for people and ecosystems are tragic. The pollution extends to the Arctic Ocean and reaches Europe by ocean currents. '

Their claim: stop the export of waste from Europe to Russia: "Each country must treat waste on its territory. '

websites: www.decomatom.ru; www.greenworld.org.ru