Ukraine De-Escalation Can Start with Ending Nuclear Weapons “Sharing”

By John LaForge

Ukraine, the United States, and NATO have condemned what they correctly call Russian President Putin’s “dangerous and irresponsible” transgression of nuclear weapons to neighboring Belarus.

On June 9, Putin announced that Moscow would deploy its nuclear weapons in Belarus, reporting that work on new facilities for housing the weapons would be complete by July 7-8.

Putin had said on March 25 that Belarusian “President Alexander Lukashenko’s right: he says we’re your closest allies. Why do the Americans deploy their nuclear weapons to their allies, on their territory, train the crews, and pilots how to use this type of weapon if needed? We agreed that we will do the same.”

Indeed, the United States has transferred more than 100 of its 50- and 170-kiloton gravity bombs known as B61s to bases in Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Turkey, where allied pilots rehearse nuclear weapons attacks using their allied fighter jets. Case in point, NATO’s “Air Deployment: Ukraine 2023,” a nine-day German-led, international fender 2023,” a nine-day German-led, international war game involving 24 countries live-flying all across Germany, began on Monday June 12, in the midst of the hot war in Ukraine.

Point of information: The Associated Press press group calling these nuclear weapons “tactical,” and less destructive than “city-busting” “strategic” devices. So it must be recalled that the city-busting Hiroshi

ma bomb was a 15-kiloton weapon far less destructive than today’s B61 “tactical” hydrogen bombs.

Now Putin and Lukashenko copy the U.S. practice of violating the terms of the 1970 Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in the same way that the United States has for decades. All such nuclear “sharing” constitutes an explicit violation of the NPT’s Articles I, II, and VI, but a hair-raising and unnecessary escalation of the quagmire powder keg in Ukraine.

Last May 15, ICAN, the Nobel Peace Prize-winning International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, confronted the increasingly globalized war in Ukraine by sending a set of four demands to the G7 — Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the U.K. and the U.S. all of which are actively arming Ukraine — to place nuclear weapons in Belarus, to cancel its plans to deploy nuclear weapons in Belarus, and to submit its plans to the U.N. Security Council for clearance.

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By Mari Inoue

Stop Holtec’s Radioactive Wastewater Dump

Holtec International wants to dump radioactive wastewater from decommissioning nuclear facilities. People and elected officials are fighting back to halt such outrageous, unilateral plans.

Founded in 1986 in New Jersey by Kris Singh, Holtec manufactures dry storage and transport casks for highly radioactive spent fuel waste from reactors. The company also built the Central Spent Fuel Storage Facility inside the Chernobyl Exclusion Zone in 2021 for Energostatom, Ukraine’s national nuclear energy company. Its wholly-owned subsidiary, Holtec Decommissioning International, provides decommissioning services for highly radioactive spent nuclear fuel waste from closed reactors.

In fact, there are three pathways for leaked radiation to affect the public: it can migrate to the river, which supplies most of the drinking water for Minneapolis; it can migrate into groundwater off-site, where it becomes available for private and municipal water pumps; and it can evaporate. There is no doubt that during the next 120 years, some fraction of the leakage will follow each of these pathways and then affect biological activity. Of course, nobody will ever know how much contamination went where, or know what it did when it got there, because radiation monitoring at Monticello, as well as at the rest of this 50-year-old commercial nuclear fleet, is mostly incapable of detecting radiation in any of these pathways. It makes better PR to just say there is no threat to public health and safety.

This Monticello pipe leak could be an omen of things to come. The leak occurred because a pipe carrying primary cooling water broke. Primary cooling water circulates through the reactor and thereby becomes radioactive. This radioactivity bombsards the pipe through which it flowed with neutrons, and over time, this neutron bombardment causes metals to get brittle. Arguably, the pipe broke because it had become embrittled and something jarred it.

The problem here — as with all nuclear reactors — is that many of them employ the Biologic Nuclear Engineering (BNES) meltdown prevention system. This system, which contains and controls the nuclear reaction, has been subjected to this same neutron bombardment. All of these metals at some elevated state of embrittlement, now that the reactor is over 50 years old. As a result, we all now get to sit around and wait to see which components will be next in line to brake, and what the consequences of that breakage will be. That could get real exciting very quickly.

— Additional news on Minnesota reactor troubles can be found at Water for Life, the newsletter of the North American Water Office (nawo.org)