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**High Probability of Another Chernobyl, 10th Anniversary Study Finds  
International Efforts to Prevent Recurrence Called “Feeble” — New Approach Proposed**

On the eve of the 10th anniversary of the Chernobyl nuclear accident, a major new study concludes that little has been done by host countries and the international community to reduce the danger of another nuclear disaster in the former Soviet Union or Eastern Europe. “Unless concerted steps are taken now to help the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe move from reliance on inadequately designed and operated atomic plants, the chances of another Chernobyl are unacceptably high,” said study author Dr. Bennett Ramberg.

Among the study’s findings:

- During the next decade, there is approximately a one-in-five chance of major damage to a Soviet-era reactor core, based on safety assessments of the currently operating facilities.
- Despite this risk and repeated declarations by leaders in the East and West that many Soviet-era reactors are unsafe, not one large power reactor has been shut down permanently.
- The majority of Soviet-era reactors cannot be salvaged. They possess generic design deficiencies that cannot be remedied.
- Continuing managerial sloppiness remains, and in many ways has worsened. As one Ukrainian official noted, “Our workers will not bend down to pick up an oil-soaked rag from the floor, even though they know that fire is the greatest of all safety risks in a nuclear plant. But if a fire breaks out, like the one here in 1986, those same workers, without a moment’s hesitation will risk their lives.” The departure of senior reactor operators because of inadequate compensation compounds this problem.
- Despite the fact that a decade has elapsed since Chernobyl, very little has been done to prevent another serious accident. The response of the international community, including the United States, has been feeble. Most attention has focused on paper studies, workshops, and conferences. Very little tangible assistance has been provided. As of the most recent audit by the United States General Accounting Office in 1994, Washington had delivered only \$3 million in nuclear safety equipment and products. The largest allocation was \$500,000 for fire trucks to Bulgaria. The international community has attempted to provide million-dollar “solutions” to billion-dollar problems.
- Unless there is a dramatic and sustained effort to reduce reliance on Soviet-era nuclear reactors (*i.e.*, an energy Marshall Plan), the risk of a second Chernobyl-type accident will remain unacceptably high.

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