

agency for nuclear safety and environmental protection is not what it should be in the Russian Federation, and second that it's up to the donors to satisfy themselves on this matter if disposition is to be sustained. But the Russian side can hardly be expected to welcome such a discussion.

On the contrary, it is very much in the Russian interest to take umbrage when anything disparaging is said about nuclear safety and environmental protection there. Officials need to be offended if they want to minimize foreign intrusion and to maximize national control over a perennial international endeavour that touches directly on highly sensitive issues and promises to run deep into the interior of their country. To the extent that they fail in this and must, as it were, kow-tow to foreigners, Minatom in particular will be taken down a few pegs in the scheme of things Russian. And beyond all this there is national pride, normal concern for sovereignty, deep-seated resentment at the West, and all the rest which may move Russian officialdom to powerful reactions when presented with views that can be interpreted as prejudicial and unjustified. But there's still more to it.

One of those I interviewed at the Kurchatov Institute insisted that the more stable Russia became, the less the United States was willing to pay for disposition of Russian WGPu, and the more it sought to spread the cost of the Russian programme among allies and others. There is surely some truth to this as a reading of the record. As well, there's a hint of the perversity that underlies donor-recipient bargaining over disposition.

To get the money it wants, the Russian side is implicitly encouraged by donors to be a problem, to remain needy and indeed incompetent in some but not to an excessive degree. Moscow, and Minatom in particular, must therefore tread a fine line: neither to be so dependent and unable as to undercut the likelihood of assistance, nor to be so self-reliant and capable as to offset donor readiness to make financial contributions. On balance, Moscow must project real but limited neediness if its WGPu holdings are to be converted into income. Accordingly and to the degree that the profit motive prevails, it is not on for Russian officials to acquiesce in donor comment on Russia's incapacity in matters of nuclear safety and environmental protection. For Moscow to let such things pass without a fight would be to risk enlarging donor perceptions of Russian inadequacy beyond the limits of what's required to produce the Multilateral Agreement and the income stream that is to come with it. The same surely applies to a discussion of conditionality per se.

A reality check therefore suggests that for the parties to bring nuclear-safety and environmental-protection issues to the fore may indeed be to increase the risk of things going wrong in the negotiation of a Multilateral Agreement. And yet, for the parties to mute a discussion of safety and environmental considerations is for them to risk sacrificing the long-term sustainability of disposition to the imperatives of achieving the Deal.

How then is a common interest in sustained disposition to be furthered without prompting Russian negotiators to go ballistic? Here we have a central problem of disposition, and of a conditionality that would support it. The problem is to ensure that everything proceeds as intended in Russia without making either unreasonable assumptions about Russian behaviour in future, or unreasonable demands for change in that behaviour now.

In part, the solution will be found in a dogged effort to negotiate arrangements that meet the legitimate performance requirements of the donor countries and the legitimate needs of the