

disposition beyond two tonnes per year, or to kill the programme altogether. A Chernobyl-strength disaster in a Russian MOX fuel fabrication facility built with international assistance? We need more assurance than we now have that disposition will not be derailed.

What's required is new agency for nuclear safety and environmental protection in Russia.

A multinational management corporation (MMC), patterned initially on an early draft by Lacy and others at the U.S. DOE, is therefore proposed as a principal means of obtaining agency for sustained disposition. Guided by the terms of the Multilateral Agreement and by an intergovernmental council, the Corporation would be a nonprofit management entity having substantial autonomy in directing the work of disposition according to highest standards. It would also have certain unconventional features designed to address particular problems of sustained disposition in Russia.

First, the Multilateral Agreement would mandate the MMC not only to get the physical job of disposition done right, but to create preconditions for the handover of everything but financial functions to the Russian Federation. Transfer of operational control over the programme could be progressive and might be completed around the time disposition itself began, which could be about ten years after a Multilateral Agreement had been struck. The prospect of handover should ease Russian acceptance of an international management entity whose mandate went well beyond the job of disposition per se.

As executive agent for the Multilateral Agreement, the MMC would have the crucial task of creating regulatory, civil-society, and political-cultural preconditions for best practice in matters of nuclear safety and environmental protection as they relate to disposition activities within Russia. The Corporation, for example, would actively support the nuclear regulator, GAN, as part of its mission to create agency for utmost care in matters of nuclear safety and environmental protection.

A paradox becomes apparent: for donors to encourage best practice in Russian conditions is for them to depart significantly from standard practice elsewhere. Specifically, it is for them to build up in Russia what is usually regarded as the nuclear industry's opposition in their own countries.

In generating agency for sustained disposition in Russia, the Multilateral Agreement should break the mold for international security institutions. It should emulate the practice of the intergovernmental Arctic Council, on which the Russian Federation and the United States sit, and include NGOs as permanent nonvoting participants in the MMC's Council. Several purposes would be served including generation of information and counsel from those likely to be attuned to the on-the-ground effects of disposition, and providing assurance to the Russian people who, it's argued, could have something of a veto over disposition. As well, one Russian and one U.S. nuclear-watchdog or environmental NGO should be included in any international nuclear-safety and environmental-impact assessment panels set up to vet the programme once the Multilateral Agreement is in hand.

The following are additional recommendations: (1) give very strong support to the U.S. proposal for the G-8 to make a down payment on a conversion facility in Russia; (2) urge the R.F. and U.S. to resume bilateral conversations for a moratorium on the reprocessing of spent fuel; (3)