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**ATOMEXPO-2024 discusses gender balance in high-tech industries**

*Rosatom shared its experience in developing and supporting women with the international community*

On March 26, the session Women's Leadership in the Development of High Technologies and Innovations was held on the sidelines of the ATOMEXPO-2024 International Forum.

It brought together representatives of business, universities, and women's associations from Russia, Egypt, Indonesia, South Africa, Serbia, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. The main topic of discussion was the underrepresentation of women in high technology and innovation and possible ways to overcome this situation. The session was moderated by Alexandra Ryabykh, co-founder of the Foundation Support and Development of Women's Initiatives “Association of Women in the Nuclear Industry”.

During the session, Tatiana Terentyeva, Deputy Director General for HR of Rosatom, made a welcoming speech, noting that the support and development of women is one of the priorities of Rosatom's personnel policy. In this area, Rosatom is in constant dialog with foreign partners, sharing experience. “At Rosatom, 32% of employees are women, whereas in the global nuclear industry these figures are lower – 26%,” she stressed. “Many of our women work in senior positions, develop new businesses, head key divisions, major nuclear power plant construction projects and contribute to the development of smart cities. Rosatom's women are also well represented in science: 35% of them are in the organizations of the scientific division.” Tatiana Terentyeva also emphasized that, according to research data, teams in which both men and women are represented work more efficiently, respond better to new challenges and improve the financial performance of businesses. Balanced teams are the key to the sustainable development of companies, countries and the world as a whole.

Gulnara Bikkulova, Deputy Director General – Director of the International Initiatives and Partnerships Unit, spoke about Rosatom's key gender balance initiatives. Among them is the Women of the Nuclear Industry community, which consists of more than 3,000 women specialists and residents of the territories of Rosatom's presence, a special women's leadership program “[in]Visible Force”, which covered 1,500 people last year, measures of social support for women, including those with children. The speaker also focused on Rosatom's international cooperation in the field of gender balance, which today covers more than 20 countries of the world, including the countries of the Middle East, Central and Southeast Asia, and the African continent.

The session was also addressed by Soheir Korraa, President of African Women in Nuclear, Professor at the Egyptian Atomic Energy Authority, Raquel Heredia, Head of Leadership Development Programs at the World Nuclear University, Geni Rina Sunario, Head of Women's Capacity Development Department at HIMNI, Snežana Pajović, Professor of Molecular Biology, Director General of the Vinča Institute of Nuclear Research, Zamira Akbagysheva, President of the Congress of Women of Kyrgyzstan, HR Director of the Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd. Elsi Pule, Zarina Sayfieva, President of WiN Tajikistan, and other experts. The session participants agreed that the representation of women in science and high-tech industries is of strategic importance for the sustainable development of society. Women can give new impetus to the economy, innovation and technological progress, so their leadership and professionalism are necessary to eliminate stereotypes and achieve balance in the field of high technology.

On the same day, the international mentoring session Women in STEM was also held. It brought together women leaders of the nuclear industry from Russia, Turkey, South Africa, India, the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, and Tajikistan. In an open dialog, they shared their life journeys and working experiences and offered advice to young girls who are just starting to build careers in high-tech industries.

Yulia Uzhakina, Director General of Rosatom Corporate Academy, addressed the audience. “I hope that today's mentoring session will inspire you to make new discoveries, and advises that you are going to hear today will help you become even stronger, confident and harmonious personalities. I can give you two advices that have influenced my life. Study and learn something new all the time — this is important in order to be interesting to your loved ones and children. I believe that it is important for a woman to develop her talent in the profession that she has a taste for, and at the same time to have an opportunity to realize her potential in other areas”.

Also, on March 26, on the sidelines of the Forum, a cooperation agreement was signed between the public association “Congress of Women of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan” and the fund for support and development of women's initiatives “Association of Women of the Nuclear Industry”. Under this agreement, the parties will cooperate in the implementation of joint projects and initiatives to attract and support women in engineering and technical specialties, improve the environment for the professional development of women, and implement professional and social projects in the interests of women. On the part of the Public Association “Congress of Women of the Kyrgyz Republic”, the agreement was signed by the President of the Public Association Zamira Akbagysheva, and on the part of the Foundation “Association of Women of the Nuclear Industry”, by its co-founder Alexandra Ryabykh.

**For reference:**

STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) is a field of study in natural sciences. Over the past 15 years, the global community has made great strides in attracting women into science, developing girls' abilities in math, physics, and engineering (STEM fields). However, the fair sex still faces restrictions, stereotypes and prejudices in professional activities.

ATOMEXPO International Forum arranged with the support of Rosatom has been held since 2009. It is the largest business and exhibition platform where managers of the major sectoral companies and the leading experts discuss the objectives for the development of nuclear technologies, strengthen their partnership and exchange the best practices. The format of the forum consists of an exhibition and an extensive business program with the main topics traditionally including the development of nuclear power engineering as an environment-friendly energy source; human capital management; construction of the nuclear power engineering infrastructure; financing and investment in the power engineering; development of non-energy nuclear technologies and many others. The forum operator is ATOMEXPO LLC.

As part of the demonstration of Rosatom's commitment to the climate agenda, the carbon footprint of the 13th International Forum ATOMEXPO-2024 will be compensated using special certificates.