**FIRST BATCH OF FUEL WAS DELIVERED TO AKKUYU NPP**

A solemn ceremony dedicated to the delivery of the first batch of nuclear fuel for the first nuclear power plant in Türkiye was held at the Akkuyu NPP construction site. This historic event marks the entry of the Republic of Türkiye into the community of countries developing nuclear generation technologies on their territory.

Vladimir Putin, President of the Russian Federation, and Recep Erdoğan, President of the Republic of Türkiye, took part in the ceremony via videoconference, Rafael Grossi, Director General of the IAEA, Fatih Dönmez, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Türkiye, Alexey Likhachev, Director General of ROSATOM, Anastasia Zoteeva, Chief Executive Officer of JSC AKKUYU NUCLEAR, and other official guests attended the event.

The leaders of the two countries gave symbolic permission to deliver the first batch of fresh nuclear fuel to the Akkuyu NPP site. Wheeled platforms with transportation casks, in which fuel assemblies were delivered to the site, proceeded from the checkpoint to the fresh fuel storage facility. Alexey Likhachev, Director General of ROSATOM, presented Fatih Dönmez, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Türkiye, with a certificate confirming the fuel delivery in compliance with all safety standards and requirements. Representatives of three generations of residents of the Gülnar district – a representative of the older generation, his schoolchild grandson and a young nuclear engineer – raised the peaceful atom flag over the Akkuyu NPP site as a sign of Türkiye's joining the community of countries developing nuclear energy technologies on their territory.

In his speech at the ceremony, Alexey Likhachev, Director General of ROSATOM, noted: “With the delivery of fresh nuclear fuel to the Akkuyu NPP site, the latter becomes a nuclear facility, and the Republic of Türkiye receives the status of a country with peaceful nuclear technologies. [ ] The construction of the first NPP in Türkiye was a truly joint project. More than 400 Turkish companies participate in it. It can be said that Türkiye has already developed its own nuclear industrial cluster. The accumulated experience of cooperation will allow us to realize the potential of this cluster on other projects.”

Fatih Dönmez, Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of Türkiye, stated in his speech: “At this stage, nuclear energy is a short-term goal for Turkey, and the site we are at is the clearest indicator that this goal is taking on real shape. We hope that next year the nuclear power plant will start generating electricity. Thus, we will add another source of energy to the country's energy sources and diversify energy portfolio of Türkiye. Akkuyu NPP will cover 10% of our electricity needs. The plant will generate 35 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity per year, which will allow us to save on imports of 7 billion cubic meters of natural gas annually and prevent the emission of 35 million tons of carbon dioxide”.

Construction of the Akkuyu NPP is one of the projects that Türkiye has been talking and dreaming about for decades. Today, the first nuclear project in the Republic of Türkiye marks the delivery of the first batch of fuel to the site of the future NPP. Hopefully, next year we will start electricity production. Akkuyu NPP will provide uninterrupted clean electricity. But Akkuyu is more than a power plant. It will play a pioneering role for the future Turkish development.”

Rafael Grossi, Director General of the IAEA, in his address to the guests of the ceremony, noted: “Nuclear energy gives good, but also responsibilities. Which is why IAEA has been associated from the beginning with the project by providing assistance to follow safety standards required. We are doing this today with the spirit of hope, a spirit of success. In another 100 years time Akkuyu NPP will still be producing clean energy. You can always count on IAEA in every step in this way from now.”

Fuel assemblies for the first power unit of the Akkuyu NPP arrived at the fresh fuel storage facility, where they will be stored in compliance with all process requirements. After the unit is ready for loading, experts will place fuel in the reactor and perform the first criticality to check the parameters of the reactor core.

The commissioning of the Akkuyu NPP will cover 10% of Türkiye's electricity needs. The plant design meets the requirements for the preservation of the environment and represents a stable source of environmentally friendly electricity. The Akkuyu NPP is the largest project in the history of Russian-Turkish cooperation and a powerful driver of Türkiye's social and economic development: growth of industry, development of the science and technology sphere, increasing the prestige of higher technical education. The implementation of the Akkuyu NPP construction project will provide conditions for creating thousands of new jobs for the country's residents.