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"The Second Decade"
Towards a New and Integrated Europe
Generating input for government
policy of the Netherlands towards
Central and Eastern Europe

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"Let the Europeans take the lead in nuclear threat reduction in Russia"

Vadimir A. Orlov

Director of the Moscow-based PIR Center for Policy Studies in Russia.

Social component critically important

"The next few years will become a key stage in implementing international efforts to cooperatively reduce the threat of nuclear insecurity (leakage and smuggling of fissile materials) and to prevent emerging proliferation risks.

'Fragile Europe' should contribute more

Although the United States's contribution to nuclear threat reduction in Russia (The CTR-programme) is decisive, Russia also highly appreciates the support provided or promised by Japan, Norway, the UK, Italy and the Netherlands, among others.

However, the amount of assistance from European countries is still small. Why? Doesn't a uniting Europe feel how active the process of the globalisation of the security agenda has become? The consequences of the Chernobyl catastrophe have demonstrated how small and fragile Europe is. It would be a big mistake to say that it is only a Russian domestic problem, and no more than that.

Without the active participation of all the leading developed economies, and Europe in particular, Russia may fail to solve the problems of nuclear arms reduction and may fail to maintain nuclear materials security. This new wave of efforts by the Western economies, led now by Europe and not by the United States, could be called CTR Plus.

Social component could be decisive

To build and develop mutual trust, it would be critically important to take into full account the social component of such programmes and efforts. In the process of arms reduction under

START treaties, the provision of housing for thousands of people who earlier worked with nuclear arms and their carriers should become one of the most important parts of the programmes. The sooner CTR and CTR Plus provide for social programmes and the more soundly they are fulfilled, the more fruitful will be our cooperation on new directions and the less frequently political objections will emerge on the part of Russia.

A policy of small deeds

Despite swelling voices surreptitiously advising the governments to ignore each other's interests, the existence of nuclear weapons makes inevitable - even in the worst case - the continuation of the strategic dialogue. An Ignore-and-neglect policy won't work. A policy of 'small deeds' should become the basis for resuming the dialogue.

It is high time we thought about exploiting the achievements of the CTR US-Russian programme and the yet unrevealed potential of the CTR Plus programme under European leadership."