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NATO ADVANCED RESEARCH WORKSHOP ON DISPOSAL OF EX-WEAPONS
PLUTONIUM
14-17 MAY IN ST. PETERSBURG

A NATO Advanced Research Workshop examining the disposal of ex-weapons plutonium will take place 14-17 May 1995 in St. Petersburg, Russia. The workshop will focus on vitrification, that is, mixing ex-weapons plutonium with high-level radioactive waste and a quantity of suitable glass frit, and melting it to form a solid glass block.

The NATO Division of Scientific and Environmental Affairs supported two earlier workshops on the management of ex-weapons plutonium. The first, in January 1994 in London, considered a wide range of technical options, designating two options as most promising. A meeting addressing the first of those options, that of burning plutonium mixed with uranium oxide (MOX) as a fuel in power reactors, was held in October 1994 in Obninsk, Russia. The meeting in St. Petersburg will explore the second option, that of vitrifying and disposing of ex-weapons plutonium.

The vitrification and disposal method remains a conceptual one at present. Experts, from East and West, will assess existing knowledge, the state-of-the-art, and identify areas in need of further research and development.

Over thirty experts from Germany and Russia, as well as Belarus, the United Kingdom, the United States, Belgium, France, Sweden and Japan, will participate in the three day workshop. Participants include representatives from the German Institute for Chemical Technology at Jülich, the V.G. Khlopin Radium Institute in St. Petersburg, Belgoprocess, the Japan Atomic Energy Research Institute, and the US Department of Energy.

Co-directors are Prof. E. Merz (Germany) (Fax: int'l-49-2461.612450) and Dr. A. Karelin (Russia) (Fax: int'l-7-812-534.7752).

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NATO Information is also available on E-mail via the following address: "NATODOC@HQ.NATO.INT"