

NUCLEAR SAFETY: 26 BLACKOUTS AT AN OCCUPIED PLANT

Russian forces have occupied the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant, Europe's largest, since 4 March 2022. The plant has lost all off-site power 26 times; the latest outage, 20 August – 7 September 2026, kept it on diesel generators for 18 days. In February 2025 a drone breached the New Safe Confinement over Chernobyl's reactor 4. The General Assembly demands that the plant be demilitarised and returned to Ukrainian control.

UKRAINE EVIDENCE HUB
VERIFIED RECORD
OCT 2026

26

complete losses of off-site power at the Zaporizhzhia plant since 2022; the latest lasted 18 days (20 Aug – 7 Sep 2026) A

IAEA updates, Aug–Sep 2026

4 Mar 2022

Zaporizhzhia plant seized under fire; six reactors in cold shutdown since Sep 2022 A

IAEA

99

states voted for GA resolution 78/316 demanding demilitarisation and return of the plant to Ukraine (9 against, 60 abstentions) A

General Assembly, 11 Jul 2024

€500m

order of cost to restore the Chernobyl New Safe Confinement after the drone strike of 14 Feb 2025 C

Novarka assessment, Mar 2026 (via World Nuclear Association)

WHAT HAPPENED

Occupation. Russian forces took the plant on 4 March 2022 after shelling the site; military personnel and vehicles have since been stationed there. Russia's regulator issued ten-year "licences" for units 1 (Dec 2025) and 2 (Feb 2026) — a step towards appropriating the plant.

Blackouts. 26 complete losses of off-site power; the plant depends on a single line at a time and on diesel with a ten-day minimum reserve. Seven local ceasefires brokered by the IAEA were needed for repairs, the latest on 5 Sep 2026. Drone incidents on the site and in Enerhodar killed and injured staff in 2026 (IAEA, without attribution).

Strikes on the grid and Chernobyl. Russian strikes on substations disconnected the Chernobyl site (14 Mar 2026, nearly 24 hours) and the Kharkiv Neutron Source (11–12 Mar 2026). On 14 Feb 2025 a drone with a high-explosive warhead hit the New Safe Confinement; the IAEA found that it lost its confinement function.

WHO VERIFIED IT

- A IAEA Director General updates on the situation in Ukraine (Updates 362–364, Aug–Sep 2026); IAEA presence at all Ukrainian nuclear power plants since Jan 2023
- A General Assembly resolution 78/316, 11 Jul 2024: demilitarise the plant and return it to the control of Ukraine's competent authorities
- A IAEA Board of Governors resolutions (2022–2024) calling on Russia to cease all actions at the plant
- B Energoatom; State Nuclear Regulatory Inspectorate of Ukraine; Ministry of Energy of Ukraine
- C World Nuclear Association chronology; Novarka consortium assessment of the Chernobyl confinement (Mar 2026)

LEGAL QUALIFICATION — THREE LAYERS

ESTABLISHED The General Assembly (78/316) and the IAEA Board of Governors have called on Russia to withdraw from the plant and return it to Ukrainian control; the IAEA Director General's seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety are not met at the occupied plant.

PATTERN AP I art. 56 and customary IHL rule 42 (works and installations containing dangerous forces); Rome Statute art. 8(2)(b)(iv). Repeated strikes on substations that nuclear sites depend on, in every winter campaign, are the pattern evidence.

POSITION Ukraine qualifies the seizure and use of the plant as nuclear blackmail and the strikes on the grid around nuclear sites as nuclear terrorism. Pending international findings.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE

Rosatom and its "operating organisation" of the plant	Operation of the occupied plant; "licences" sought for all six units	US, UK and EU sanctions on Rosatom subsidiaries and officials
Rostekhnadzor	Regulatory "licences" for units 1 and 2 of a Ukrainian plant	Not recognised by the IAEA; GA 78/316
Armed forces at the site	Military presence and equipment at a nuclear plant	Documented by IAEA teams on site
Supreme Commander	Decision to seize and hold the plant	ICC arrest warrant, 17 Mar 2023; art. 28

RUSSIA SAID / THE RECORD SAYS

RUSSIA, STANDING POSITION

Ukraine shells the Zaporizhzhia plant.

ROSATOM, 2026

The plant is a Russian facility licensed by Rostekhnadzor.

RUSSIAN MFA, STANDING POSITION

Chernobyl was hit by a Ukrainian "provocation".

THE RECORD

The IAEA does not attribute the drone incidents. What is established is that Russia occupies and militarises the plant, and that its strikes on substations cut the plant's power.

THE RECORD

The General Assembly demands its return to Ukraine's competent authorities; the IAEA recognises Ukraine's regulator. The Director General says no restart is possible while the war continues.

THE RECORD

The IAEA confirmed a drone with a high-explosive warhead hit the confinement; Ukraine identified a Shahed-type drone, the type Russia launches every night.

WHAT WE ASK OF MEMBER STATES

- Demand the demilitarisation of the Zaporizhzhia plant and its return to Ukraine, as resolution 78/316 requires.
- Refuse any recognition of Russian "licences" or of the plant's transfer to Rosatom.
- Call for an end to strikes on substations and lines that nuclear sites depend on, and support IAEA-brokered repairs.
- Fund the restoration of the Chernobyl New Safe Confinement through the international account.

