



**KOMMUNENES INTERNASJONALE MILJØORGANISASJON
LOCAL AUTHORITIES INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL
ORGANISATION**

PRESS RELEASE

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Shipment of Ultra Hazardous Radioactive Cargoes on Atlantic Osprey Provides Potential Terrorist Target

The Atlantic Osprey, owned by the British Nuclear Group, will transport 1.25 tonnes of mixed oxide fuel (MOX) fuel containing about 90kg of plutonium to Swiss utility Nordostschweizerische Kraftwerke (NOK) in the next couple of days. The MOX will be transported by sea from Sellafield to Cherbourg before it is delivered to the Beznau plant in Switzerland overland. The route will pass close to one of the most densely populated areas in the world and will cross some of the busiest shipping lanes, therefore increasing the potential for collision and making it easier for a potential terrorist attack.

Traditionally MOX has been transported to and from Japan using purpose built vessels that are of the best available technology currently in service. However shipments of MOX to Switzerland, of which this is the second, are using the Atlantic Osprey, an ex-roll on roll off ferry. The Atlantic Osprey has a single hull, single engine and will travel unescorted throughout its journey unlike the shipments to Japan which travel in purpose built vessels with twin engines, double hulls and naval armament, with two vessels travelling together to provide support in case of an attack.

The lack of emergency planning in the event of a marine accident involving nuclear material is also a serious issue along with the questionable integrity of the flasks used to transport nuclear fuel. Evidence shows that ship borne fires last longer on average and at a more intense heat than the safety criteria used in flask stress.

The potential impact on coastal communities from an accident or terrorist attack would be devastating. Many coastal communities, including KIMO's members, depend on an environment that provides fresh, clean and healthy resources. The irreparable damage to the environment, public health and economy that could arise as a result of an accident involving a ship carrying nuclear waste would have disastrous consequences.

KIMO International President Councillor Angus Nicolson stated,

“KIMO remains convinced that the transport of nuclear materials should be halted and that such materials should be stored at the point of production. However should these shipments go ahead Governments should be insisting that the highest standards of ship and security arrangements are in place to protect their citizens.

This means that the Best Available Technology (BAT) should be applied to the ships and flasks used in European shipments and should be at least to the same standard to the ships that are used for MOX shipments to Japan. The arrangements surrounding these proposed shipments are flawed and second rate.

It is absolutely irresponsible in this day and age where we are requiring super tankers carrying oil to have double hulls to protect our marine environment that these dangerous cargoes are being transported in an ex roll on roll off ferry with a single engine and single hull through some of the most populated areas of Europe with no escort.

KIMO stresses that if an attack by terrorists succeeds in an incident involving a severe long-term fire, breaching shipping casks and/or sinking a nuclear transport vessel, the consequences would be comparable to the most severe accident that authorities insist is too improbable to be considered.”

A full report on the Transport of Mixed Oxide Fuel and other Radioactive Cargoes by Ship in Europe is available on the KIMO website www.kimointernational.org

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