



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

## **PRESS RELEASE**

**November 4<sup>th</sup> 2005**

### **KIMO Opposes Proposed Ultra Hazardous Radioactive Cargoes near UK Coastlines**

A report, being discussed today in Edinburgh, has highlighted significant differences between the types of ships and security arrangements carrying ultra hazardous radioactive cargoes near UK coastlines.

The report compiled by KIMO UK, which represents coastal authorities in Scotland, England and Wales, and which is affiliated with the local authority international environmental organisation representing over 6 million coastal inhabitants around northern Europe has highlighted that European coastal communities are being treated as second class citizens as compared to other communities when comes to the transport of ultra hazardous radioactive cargoes.

British Nuclear Group delivered the first four mixed-oxide (MOX) assemblies it has fabricated in the Sellafield MOX Plant (SMP) to Swiss utility Nordostschweizerische Kraftwerke (NOK) in the spring of 2005, marking the start of a series of MOX and plutonium dioxide transports from the U.K. to mainland Europe.<sup>1</sup> Traditionally MOX has been transported to and from Japan using purpose built vessels. However the company expects to use the Atlantic Osprey, an ex-roll on roll off ferry, for MOX shipments to Sweden and possibly other destinations in Europe.

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. Possible routes to Sweden include; through the English Channel and the North Sea, the Irish Sea, or west of Ireland into the North East Atlantic Ocean; all of which pass through oilfields and/or fishing grounds and sensitive eco systems.

The lack of emergency planning in the event of a marine accident involving nuclear material; the questionable integrity of the flasks used to transport

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<sup>1</sup> Nuclear Fuel / Volume 30 / Issue 12 / June 6, 2005  
First SMP-made MOX assemblies delivered to NOK

nuclear fuel; and evidence that ship borne fires last longer on average and at a more intense heat than the safety criteria used in flask stress tests are major issues for the organisation who have been campaigning for higher standards for many years. The question of liability and compensation in the event of a nuclear accident at sea is also a major concern.

The transportation of nuclear and toxic waste by sea is an issue of great concern to members of KIMO as the communities they represent all depend on a clean environment and perhaps more importantly a perception of a pristine marine environment that produces fresh, clean and healthy resources. This is, in many cases, the basis of survival for many small remote rural and island communities. The irreparable damage to this image that could arise as a result of an accident involving a ship carrying nuclear waste could have disastrous consequences on local economies not withstanding the environmental and health hazards that could occur.

Newly elected 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 above ground at the point of production. However should these shipments go ahead they must also employ the Best Available Technology (BAT) and compared to the ships which are used for MOX shipments to Japan the arrangement 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 ex roll on roll off ferry with a single engine and single hull through some of the most populated areas of Europe.*

*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.”*

The full report is available on the KIMO website [www.kimointernational.org](http://www.kimointernational.org)

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