

*Bronislav KULIKOV, Special Envoy for Ukraine, Head of Business Development for Eastern Europe WITKOWITZ Group*

*note on the current state and prospects of the Ukrainian nuclear program, in a situation where for objective reasons no form of communication with Ukrainian colleagues was possible*

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First, I would like to thank the organizers and the guests of today's conference for their efforts directed at the energy independence and security of the world in such a difficult time for all of us.

I represent the Czech mechanical engineering group WITKOWITZ, which is one of the important players in the Czech nuclear energy sector. My short speech is dedicated to Ukraine, which is one of the most important European partners in the field of nuclear energy. WITKOWITZ is the manufacturer and official supplier of energy equipment for Ukrainian nuclear power plants, and together with other partners in the Czech Energy Alliance CPIA, does everything possible to support the Ukrainian nuclear industry.

Despite the war, Ukraine continues to be our reliable partner and responsible operator of existing Ukrainian nuclear power plants. My mission, among other things, includes coordinating the Czech-Ukrainian partnership in the field of nuclear energy. This concerns industrial and scientific-technical cooperation

with leading Ukrainian organizations, including the Academy of Sciences of Ukraine and state nuclear regulatory authorities.

I recently returned from my seventh business trip to Kyiv during the war. I had the honor to speak at the fifth international conference on innovation in nuclear energy, where I presented the Center for Energy Stability SYNERGOATOM, created on our Czech, Ukrainian and Polish initiative. During the conference, my colleague Martin Groch, the head of the technological company CZECHATOM, who is in this room, remotely presented the Conceptual Design of the small modular reactor DAVID. DAVID SMR is a national Czech project owned by WITKOWITZ Group, but its development is taking place in cooperation with our Ukrainian scientific colleagues, and active consultations with NAEK Energoatom and the Ukrainian Nuclear Regulator. This interaction brings Czech and Ukrainian industrial and scientific-technical enterprises into the process, strengthening the Eastern European partnership in the field of nuclear energy innovation.

Our plans included a speech at today's conference by one of the representatives of the NAEK Energoatom top management, but for all known reasons we were unable to organize this in the planned format. In this regard, I would like to briefly convey a consolidated message from the leadership of the main state entities regulating Ukrainian nuclear energy, with whom we have been working all this time, despite the war. This message is clear and simple:

Ukraine is a peace-loving state, which, despite the difficult period of the war with the bloody aggressor, continues to be

one of the most developed nuclear countries in the world. Unable to operate its nuclear power plants at full capacity, Ukraine is doing everything possible to operate with maximum professional responsibility and compliance with all necessary standards, especially those related to nuclear safety requirements. Ukraine is carefully preparing a large-scale upgrade of its nuclear energy system and is confident that the only chance to implement this correctly is close international cooperation with the world's leading industry players. Ukraine is grateful to the international community for its support of Ukrainian nuclear energy sector during this most difficult period for the whole of Europe and will continue to fight to defend our common peaceful future.

Slava Ukraine! Glory to Europe!