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QUADRIPARTITE COORDINATION COMMITTEE ON CHERNOBYL TO MEET AT MINISTERIAL LEVEL AT HEADQUARTERS 18 NOVEMBER

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NEW YORK, 16 November (OCHA) -- On Thursday, 18 November, Carolyn McAskie, Acting United Nations Coordinator of International Cooperation on Chernobyl, will convene a meeting at the Ministerial level of the Quadripartite Coordination Committee on International Cooperation on Chernobyl. The meeting, which will take place from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Economic and Social Council Chamber, is aimed at increasing support for the 1999 United Nations Appeal for International Cooperation on Chernobyl.

More than 13 years after the tragic nuclear accident, many are unaware of the serious long-term consequences that are being faced by some 7 million people in the most affected areas of Belarus, the Russian Federation and the Ukraine. The sad fact is that while the explosive stories of the clouds of radiation have long since faded from international headlines, the most serious health ramifications of Chernobyl are yet to be confronted by the innocent victims. Only a minute fraction of the resources to help the needy has been mobilized to date.

The United Nations Appeal, which requests a total of \$9.5 million, is aimed at bringing quick and tangible relief to the affected communities. The document, which is accessible on www.reliefweb.int, contains projects in the areas of health, the environment, socio-psychological rehabilitation and economic recovery.

The main objective of the Quadripartite Coordination Committee on International Cooperation on Chernobyl is to raise awareness of the persistent economic, social, health and environmental consequences of this disaster. Alexander Sychov, Permanent Representative of Belarus to the United Nations, Sergey V. Khetagurov, Action Minister for Emergencies of the Russian Federation and Vasyl V. Durdynets, Minister for Emergencies of Ukraine, will be addressing the meeting on the critical requirements in their countries.

The United Nations urges all donors to respond generously to the Appeal, as an act of solidarity with over 7 million innocent people whose lives have been torn asunder by the Chernobyl disaster. Contributions can be made in cash and/or in kind to the United Nations Trust Fund for Chernobyl, administered by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), directly to implementing agencies or on a bilateral basis.

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