

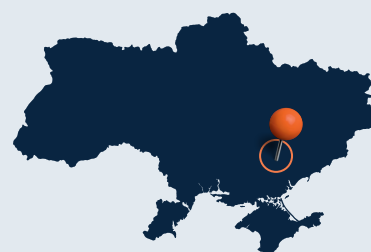
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Since the first day of its seizure, Russia has been using the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant to blackmail Ukraine, all of Europe and the world.

Ukraine’s President Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Photo: Reuters

Gambling with nuclear safety in Zaporizhzhia



The ongoing occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, Europe’s largest, poses a serious risk of a large-scale nuclear disaster. In addition, Russian forces have carried out a systematic, widespread campaign of abductions, torture and murder of the plant’s staff and residents.

ISSUE

- Abuse during occupation
- Disregard of nuclear hazards

CRIMES

- Unlawful detention
- Torture and inhuman treatment
- Disappearance
- Extrajudicial killing
- Right to a fair trial
- Violation of other rules of war

1984-1995

**The power plant
is built**

Russia's occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has refocused attention on the threat to the safety of nuclear power plants during wartime.

24 February 2022

**Russia's full-
scale invasion
begins**

In September 2022, Russia asserted control over the Zaporizhzhia region in south-eastern Ukraine. The power plant was disconnected from the energy grid multiple times, and Rosatom, Russia's state-owned nuclear company, became the de facto operator of the facility. In doing so, it became complicit in large-scale violations of international law.

3-4 March 2022

**Russian forces
control the
power plant**

The Russian military targeted territorial defence volunteers, pro-Ukrainian activists, and power plant personnel who refused to collaborate. Personnel were abducted and detained in incommunicado detention centres without access to legal counsel. They were forced to sign new contracts with Russian-owned companies, and their families were threatened if they refused. Individuals faced false charges of espionage and treason.

30 September 2022

**Russia
announces
the annexatio
n of the
Zaporizhzhia
oblast**

Seven detention sites have been documented in the area surrounding the power plant, where at least 226 residents and power plant personnel were unlawfully detained. They were held in overcrowded facilities, subjected to physical and psychological torture, and deprived of food, water, and medical care in violation of international law. The torture included electric shocks, suffocation, mock executions, and forced digging of their own graves.

**Since September
2022**

**The IAEA reports
explosions, drone
attacks and
gunfire, putting
nuclear safety at
risk**

Learn more

