

Rosatom Orders IAEA Evaluation on Kaliningrad Nuke Plant

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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VIENNA — State nuclear energy company Rosatom has requested that the International Atomic Energy Agency, or IAEA, assess the environmental impact of a Russian nuclear power plant currently under construction in Kaliningrad.

The Baltic power plant project was initially export-oriented, with planned electricity sales to neighboring Baltic states and Poland. However, its future was put into question amid concerns expressed by potential electricity buyers, including Lithuania.

Rosatom chief Sergei Kiriyenko said the IAEA request was prepared during his meeting earlier this week with IAEA general director Yukiya Amano.

"We leave the environmental assessment impact to IAEA experts — this is unprecedented, for the first time ever," he said. "We have made an obvious gesture. We have placed an order with IAEA experts and are going to pay for it ourselves."

"We believe this is absolutely necessary to enhance trust in the project in the international arena," he added.

Russia started construction of the two-unit Baltic power plant in Kaliningrad in 2010, in a bid to offset an increasing energy crisis in the region. Under the project, each of the station's two units was to have a capacity of 1,194 megawatts and a lifespan of 60 years. The first unit was to go into service in 2017.

The Lithuanian Foreign Ministry said in a statement Aug. 27 that under the Espoo Convention, which obliges countries to assess the environmental impact of certain activities at an early stage of planning, Russia should have assessed potential risks before beginning the project. Russia signed the convention in 1991, but has never ratified it.

Nikolai Tsukanov, governor of Kaliningrad region, said last week that the final decision for the project would be made by early December.

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