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A remembrance to repress and to forget ?

Opening of the Conference on Chernobyl + 20 in Kiev

Actrice Halyna Stefanowa (Kiev), Rebecca Harms, Claude Turmes and Rainder Steenblock in front of nuclear 4

"I cannot find words to describe the things I have seen and experienced", "I have never heard such things before", "I have never read anything like this, and I have never seen it in a movie". Reflections on Chernobyl – title of the first day of the conference "Chernobyl + 20 in Kiev: Remembrance for the future". **Halyna Stefanowa**, an actress from Kiev, reanimated the texts of Belarusian Swetlana Alexiiewitsch.

"What we know about fear and terror is usually linked to war. The Stalin Gulag and Auschwitz are recent incarnations of evil. History has always been the history of generals and wars, the war functioned as a scale of fear. As a result, humans tend to interchange the concepts of war and catastrophe that makes it difficult for us to understand that we are in a new history."

Chernobyl sarcophagus, Rebecca Harms in the contamination control at the exit of the exclusion zone

In the light of Chernobyl, the old notions of 'far' and 'close' have failed. Rethinking the catastrophe, gaining a new perspective was one objective of the conference according to **Rebecca Harms**, energy expert and speaker of the German Green group in the European Parliament.

"We want to get to the bottom of the Chernobyl accident. We want to know how anything like this could happen; we want to find a just interpretation of what has happened, in order to prevent a new catastrophe of this scale".

Abandoned flats, cemetery of contaminated machines

More than 400 people took part in the opening of the conference in the 'House of the Teacher' on Sunday, 23 April. On Monday, 24 April, discussion panels and workshops dealt with different topics, such as the health consequences of the catastrophe and the actual costs of nuclear energy.

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