

OPINION

Group of Experts under Article 31 of the Euratom Treaty

Subject: Extension of Council Regulation (EC) No 733/2008 (Codified version of Council Regulation (EEC) No 737/90)

The Commission proposes to extend for another period of ten years the provisions of Council Regulation (EC) No 733/2008 (Codified version of Council Regulation (EEC) No 737/90) on the conditions governing imports of agricultural products originating in third countries following the accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station.

The Commission judges the extension to be justified by the fact that the reasons prevailing at the time Council Regulation (EEC) No 737/90 was adopted and extended twice remain valid; caesium-137 contamination of certain agricultural products originating in the third countries most affected by the Chernobyl accident may still exceed the maximum permitted levels laid down in the Regulation of 1990. A number of products originating from wild species living and growing in natural and semi-natural areas may present high levels of caesium-137 contamination and the reduction with time of these levels in these products essentially relates to the physical half-life of that radionuclide, which is 30 years.

The Group endorses the Commission's proposal for a prolongation of the Regulation and takes note of the Commission's statement that no changes in substance would be introduced.



Luxembourg, 26 November 2008

Kaare Ulbak,

Chairman of the Group of Experts