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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NATIONAL NUCLEAR REGULATOR (NNR) CONDUCTS A NUCLEAR REGULATORY EMERGENCY EXERCISE TO TEST THE ONSITE AND OFFSITE RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS TO A SIMULATED RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCY AT THE KOEBERG NUCLEAR POWER STATION.

19 November 2024, Cape Town South Africa. The NNR conducted a nuclear regulatory emergency exercise at the Koeberg nuclear power station in Cape Town. The overall objective of the exercise was to evaluate the readiness of the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station and local authorities within the 16km urgent protective emergency planning zone to respond to a potential radiological emergency emanating from the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station.

The exercise tested response arrangements during various stages of a radiological emergency, including the identification of accident conditions, activation of the onsite emergency control centre, communication between intervening organisations, public evacuation process, operation of the mass care centres, transport arrangements, decontamination, distribution of potassium iodate tablets, logistics and the response of the local disaster operations centre.

“This exercise was an excellent opportunity for Eskom Koeberg and the local emergency response organisations in the City of Cape Town to practice their emergency response arrangements and procedures and to identify areas of improvement. Exercises like these ensure all role-players know their roles when it comes to protecting the public and the environment in the event of a radiological emergency” said NNR CEO, Ditebogo Kgomo. “Lessons learned from this exercise will be used to continuously improve the integrated response efforts to ensure that the public and property are protected in the event of radiological emergency at the Koeberg Nuclear Power Station.” she added.

Enquiries: Gino Moonsamy – 082 535 5365

About the National Nuclear Regulator

The National Nuclear Regulator is a public entity which is established and governed in terms of Section 3 of the National Nuclear Regulator Act, (Act No 47 of 1999). The fundamental objective of the NNR is to provide for the protection of persons, property and the environment against nuclear damage through the establishment of safety standards and regulatory practices suited for South Africa. To this end, the NNR provides oversight and assurance that activities related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in South Africa are carried out in a safe and secure manner and in accordance with international principles and best practices.

Nuclear Emergency Planning

Nuclear activities are conducted within a framework which aims to prevent accidents but also to mitigate their consequences. Section 38 of the National Nuclear Regulator Act mandates the NNR to ensure that provisions for nuclear emergency planning are in place and prescribes that the regulator must ensure the effectiveness of nuclear authorisation holder's emergency preparedness and response arrangements for protection of persons and the environment.

The effectiveness of the nuclear emergency plan is, amongst others, verified through periodic emergency exercises at nuclear and radiological facilities in order to test the established plans, preparedness and response arrangements, relevant procedures, equipment, resources, competency of personnel in performing their assigned tasks, ability of individuals and off-site response organisations to work in a coordinated manner, and identification of areas of improvements.