



## **Kharkiv, new attack on the Research Institute, checks are underway for any damage**

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## **Kharkiv, new attack on the Research Institute, checks are**



## underway for any damage

The radiological risk is low, the danger of toxic chemical emissions remains in the area if the center of the plant is hit

Technical checks are still underway after the new attack on the Kharkov Institute of Physics and Technology plant which took place last night, according to a tweet released by the Ukrainian parliament, which confirmed the news given by the "Kyiv Independent".

At the moment, the Ukrainian regulatory body SNRIU has not given information on the incident or provided details on any consequences on the plant which, however, had not suffered damage to the nuclear components in previous attacks.

In any case, the risk of radiological contamination is low.

In fact, the Kharkiv plant - which is the result of a collaboration with the United States Argonne National Laboratory for the use of low-enriched uranium-235 - despite having an assembly of elements made up of Uranium, is not configured like a nuclear reactor as it is a subcritical system, therefore unable to sustain the chain reaction of nuclear fission.

However, the harmful toxic potential of the substances contained in the system must also be taken into account, in particular the presence of a structure consisting of beryllium that surrounds the assembly of uranium elements. Beryllium, if pulverized and inhaled, is highly toxic and harmful. Should the bombing reach the assembly of the system (uranium + beryllium), the resulting contamination could be important for the population present in the areas immediately surrounding the institute.

Finally, there are no updates regarding the removal of the unexploded rocket in the institute area. Due to the ongoing military operations - reports the IAEA - it has not yet been possible to remove the bomb.

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