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VINCI AND BOUYGUES SIGN CONTRACT TO BUILD CONTAINMENT SHELTER FOR THE CHERNOBYL SARCOPHAGUS

VINCI Construction Grands Projets (leader) and Bouygues Travaux Publics, as 50/50 partners in the Novarka consortium, have announced the signature of the "New Safe Confinement" contract for Chernobyl with ChNPP. The project, which is to be performed on behalf of the State-owned Ukrainian company ChNPP, is financed by an international fund administered by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD).

The EUR 432million contract comprises the design and construction of a confinement shelter in the form of an arch of exceptional dimensions, designed to permit the future dismantling of the old sarcophagus and the wreckage of the reactor that exploded on 26 April 1986. The arch will consist of an 18,000-ton metal framework spanning the existing sarcophagus. It will be 105 metres high, 150 metres long, with a 257-metre span. A special ventilation system will be put in place to prevent the spread of radioactive particles into the environment. The arch will be assembled to the west of the site, in a specially developed zone some distance from the damaged reactor. It will then be slid into place over the existing sarcophagus.

The project will employ 900 people at its peak. All personnel present on the site will be specially equipped to ensure their safety and protection against radiation (including radiation-proof suits and breathing masks), and they will be subject to regular medical and radiation checks. In addition the site will be monitored permanently for radioactivity and atmospheric contamination.

Work will start at the end of 2007 and will last 53 months, including 18 months of planning and design studies.

This contract win, thanks to the know-how of VINCI Construction Grands Projets and Bouygues Travaux Publics in the field of nuclear civil engineering and the management of major international projects, is the culmination of important contract negotiations beginning with the international competition for ideas launched by Ukraine, which VINCI won in 1993.

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