

Philippines President wants report on nuclear waste

Waste from Palau!

Manilla Standard Today
September 5, 2006

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo said yesterday the government will not allow the country's territorial waters to become transport lanes or dumps for hazardous chemicals.

The President made the statement after praising Customs for intercepting a barge carrying a shipment of nuclear waste in Surigao and arresting its captain and crew.

Customs agents also held for questioning the crew of the tugboat towing the barge, which was said to be carrying 2 million liters of nuclear waste from Palau.

Presidential Spokesman Ignacio Bunye said Mrs. Arroyo had ordered Customs and the environment department to submit a full report on the incident.

"All clandestine attempts to degrade our environment and threaten public health must be stopped," he said.

Mrs. Arroyo had earlier ordered the Coast Guard to enforce maritime rules more strictly following the sinking of the tanker Solar 1 off Guimaras Island on Aug. 11, sending thousands of liters of bunker oil spilling into the sea and polluting beaches, mangroves and marine sanctuaries.