

**Statement of the Czech Republic**

**Delivered by Ms. Dana Drábová**

**President of the State Office for Nuclear Safety**

**To the 2014 IAEA General Conference**

**Of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

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Thank you, Mr. President.

My delegation congratulates you on your election as President of this Conference. We have confidence that, under your leadership, the Conference will be given every opportunity to reach successful outcomes on all its agenda items. I assure you and the Secretariat of my delegation's full support in making this Conference a success. I would also like to add the congratulations of the Czech Republic to those states whom we have welcomed at this year's General Conference as new members of the IAEA: Comoros, the Republic of Djibouti, the Co-operative Republic of Guyana and the Republic of Vanuatu.

Mr. President, Excellencies, distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen, the Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union by Italy. I would like to add a few points in my national capacity.

Mr. President,

if I were to look back and take stock of important events we have experienced since the last General Conference, I would mention first, and perhaps not only from a chronological point of view, the two IAEA review missions hosted in the Czech Republic at the end of last year.

A review of corporate safety performance at ČEZ, the largest national electricity company in the Czech Republic, was successfully completed in October. For the first time since the Agency launched its OSART missions, an international team of nuclear safety experts addressed corporate aspects of a company in relation to nuclear safety necessary to ensure the safe operation of nuclear power plants, emphasising the organizational and human side rather than the technology. The OSART team identified good corporate practices and provided proposals for improvements of corporate processes and performance important to the operational safety of NPPs.

In November, the Czech Republic hosted the Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission. The international team of senior safety experts reviewed the legal and regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety, addressing all facilities and activities regulated by the regulatory authority, State Office for Nuclear Safety (SONS). As recommended by the IAEA Nuclear Safety Action Plan, special attention was given to regulatory implications for nuclear safety in the light of the TEPCO-Fukushima Dai-ichi accident. A number of good practices were identified. It is my pleasure to share with you the observations made by the IRRS review team. They include, among others, the following:

- the Czech regulatory system for nuclear and radiation safety is robust;
- the regulator is an effective and independent regulatory body;
- the Czech Republic actively participates in the global safety regime;

- the regulator benefits from experienced, technically competent and well-motivated staff.

When reviewing how the Czech Republic's regulatory body is using lessons learned from the Fukushima accident the review team found that Czech authorities had thoroughly assessed the regulatory implications of the accident and identified and scheduled actions that would further enhance nuclear and radiation safety. Both the review and the preparation for the review were a unique opportunity for SONS to improve the safety framework and the outcome of the mission will help us in our work.

The IRRS Team also made recommendations and suggestions for improvements to enhance the effectiveness of the regulatory framework and functions, which brings me to another key issue on our internal agenda presently – updating legislation covering comprehensively all administratively-legal aspects of nuclear field, namely the Atomic Act. Although the current Atomic Act has served its purpose very effectively for the past 17 years, it is becoming necessary to adjust the legally binding safety requirements to recent developments in the European Union legislation, IAEA safety standards, and WENRA Reference Levels. These internationally binding requirements and recommendations have undergone many fundamental changes in the past decade which should in our view be reflected not just by an amendment but rather by introducing a new Atomic Act and a set of implementing regulations. The draft

of a new Atomic Act that was presented for comment procedure includes changes that should, as confirmed by the IRRS experts, further improve the regulation of nuclear and radiation safety in the Czech Republic.

Mr. President,

I note closely that the Czech Government expressed the common view of ten European countries recognising nuclear energy's role in the European energy mix in a letter to the European Commission sent in June. The governments demand a level playing field for all low-emission sources in the EU in reaction to market failures preventing new nuclear build from contributing to energy security, sustainability, decarbonisation and securing indigenous energy supply. Bearing in mind the role of nuclear power in ensuring these goals it is vitally important to strengthen our efforts to ensure the highest level of nuclear safety to face the said challenges. On a related note, at the 6<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety it was decided to submit a Proposal by Switzerland to Amend Article 18 of the Convention to a Diplomatic Conference. A similar, although broader process of legislative development in the area of nuclear safety, has been taking place in the EU, which recently amended its 2009 Nuclear Safety Directive. The amendment, among others, introduces a high-level EU-wide safety objective to prevent accidents and avoid radioactive releases, providing a reference for the implementation of reasonably practicable safety improvements to existing

nuclear installations, which could in my view provide inspirational input to the discussion about the Swiss Proposal at the Diplomatic Conference.

Mr. President,

It is my pleasure to recall that this year IAEA's Director General, Mr. Amano, paid his first ever official visit to the Czech Republic. As the President of SONS, I was pleased to welcome Mr. Amano at its Headquarters and give him a tour of our Emergency Response Centre. The issues discussed during the visit included the Czech Republic's collaboration with the Agency through Peaceful Uses Initiative projects and the IAEA technical cooperation program. In this regard, let me assure you that the Czech Republic still attaches great importance to the Agency's technical cooperation activities. It is apparent that the limited funds bring enormous impact if they correspond to actual needs of Member States and are used effectively and transparently. Allow me to emphasise that TC projects should serve for the purpose of capacity building, experience sharing and keeping up with the IAEA standards. From our perspective the TC projects deliver primarily a number of training and educational events offering expertise for the new generation of our nuclear specialists. It gives me pleasure to assure you that the Czech Republic has continued to hold the status of a "net contributor", providing extrabudgetary contributions amounting to approximately 200 000 EUR each year. The extrabudgetary contributions are targeted at priority activities, such as assisting Armenia in upgrading its national

nuclear regulatory infrastructure, strengthening the radiation therapy services of its Oncological Centre in Yerevan and enhancing the operational safety of its Medzamor NPP.

Turning to the area of safeguards, the Czech Republic shares the view that adequate implementation of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) requires that the IAEA safeguards regime should be kept strong to preserve international peace and security. In this respect, we strongly support universal adoption and implementation of the IAEA comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols as the current verification standard. We also share the notion that the approach known as State-Level Concept (SLC), developed to provide assurances that there are no undeclared nuclear activities in the state as a whole, contributes significantly to strengthening the IAEA's safeguards system. The Czech Republic is honoured to have been entrusted by NSG Participating Governments to chair from June 2013 to June 2014 this body which substantially reinforces the spirit and purposes of the NPT through its efforts to counter ever evolving nuclear threats. We are proud that last year's Prague Plenary could conclude on a fundamental review of NSG control lists. Also, I am pleased to note that the Prague NSG Plenary agreed to create a Technical Experts Group as a standing body to consider additional measures to keep our lists up to date.

Mr. President, that concludes my remarks, and I wish you and the conference every success.