

Statement by Estonia

58th General Conference of the IAEA, Vienna, September 2014

Mr President,

On behalf of the Estonian delegation, I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as the President of the 58th General Conference. I would like to assure you of our full support and cooperation.

Fully aligning with the European Union statement delivered yesterday by Italy, I would like to point out some issues of particular interest to Estonia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Estonia is a country without nuclear installations. In the 1990's, we started to build up our national framework for radiation safety. Since 1992, Estonia has been a member of the IAEA and enjoyed its various networks of support for the creation and maintenance of the system of safety and protection that meets internationally recognized criteria.

In particular, we highly value the **technical cooperation** programme of the IAEA, and its role in enhancing nuclear safety and security. The Agency's expertise helps to develop competences in the safe use of radiation and to improve the national regulatory framework. For Estonia, participation in the IAEA's TC programme is continuously relevant, with regard to efforts to establish national education and training programmes.

Estonia is determined to continue its good cooperation with the IAEA to achieve the highest level of nuclear safety and to be a solid partner to the IAEA and its Member States. Recently, preparations have started for the first IAEA Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission to Estonia in 2016. Under the technical cooperation programme, an international training course on *Hybrid Imaging Technology in Nuclear Medicine* will be held in Estonia in October this year.

Mr President,

The global economic development, including the energy sector has a major impact on the environment. Estonia considers **nuclear energy** as an alternative to fossil energy sources, and has not ruled out the use of nuclear power as one of the options for energy production in the future.

Nevertheless, using nuclear power and ensuring its **safety** requires the best knowledge, transparent and effective regulatory systems, good cooperation between governmental and non-governmental actors, and implementation of the Nuclear Safety Standards established by the IAEA. Estonia appreciates the work done by the IAEA and its Member States in the frame of safety conventions

and looks forward to a successful Diplomatic Conference to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety in February next year.

We recognise the IAEA's important role in strengthening the international nuclear security framework through promoting the implementation of relevant legal instruments, enhancing international cooperation and assisting states in nuclear security capacity building. Estonia welcomes the agency's Nuclear Security Plan for 2014-2017 and is happy to continue with its annual contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund.

Estonia supports all measures that lead to higher nuclear safety and security standards, both nationally and internationally. We call on IAEA Member States to ensure the highest levels of safety and security of nuclear installations, directly affecting their own and neighbouring countries. Transparency is needed before the construction as well during the operation of nuclear facilities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Estonia acknowledges that the promotion of nuclear **non-proliferation** and ensuring the non-diversion of nuclear technologies, while advancing the use of nuclear sciences, is a challenging task, in which the IAEA's system of safeguards plays a central role. In this regard, we welcome the evolution of the State-level concept (SLC), which can further strengthen the safeguards system. Estonia also supports the on-going efforts to seek a diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue. We have provided voluntary contribution in support of the implementation of the Geneva Joint Plan of Action and encourage other states to do the same.

Finally, I would like to express our appreciation of the work done by the IAEA to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy and we call upon all countries to support the Agency in these efforts. At this point, we would like to announce that Estonia is interested in becoming an elected member of the IAEA Board of Governors in the coming years.

Thank you, Mr President