

STATEMENT OF GEORGIA
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Madam President,

On behalf of the Government of Georgia, I congratulate you on your election as a President of the 63rd General Conference. I assure you and Secretariat of the Georgian delegation's support in making this conference a success.

At the outset, I would like to express my deepest condolences to the family of Director General Yukiya Amano and to the IAEA staff upon the passing of Mr. Amano. This is a great loss for the Agency and for the international community.

Distinguished delegates,

We attach great importance to the IAEA's core responsibilities in the field of non-proliferation, nuclear energy, nuclear safety, nuclear security and technical cooperation. We look forward to the General Conference having a focused discussion on these areas of IAEA expertise.

I would like to underline the importance of the IAEA safeguards system in the implementation of the NPT. Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements together with Additional Protocols constitute the current verification standard and we continue to call for their universalization without delay.

The proliferation of nuclear and radioactive materials remains a subject of serious concern for Georgia. In recent years, we had several recorded attempts of smuggling nuclear and radioactive materials via Georgia's territories, which are occupied by Russia and which further amplifies the sense of danger. Fortunately, these illegal activities were duly prevented by Georgian law enforcement agencies.

However, in the absence of the international presence on Georgia's occupied territories, it has become virtually impossible to conduct any type of verification activities on the ground.

Dear Colleagues,

Last year Georgia joined a Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. In this context and with the support of the IAEA and French relevant agencies, Georgian Patient, effected by the radiological accident received innovative medical treatment in France which saved his life.

Georgia continues its development in the field of Nuclear and Radiation Safety and Security. Regulatory system is being improved with the strong support of the Government of Georgia. Governmental contributions and resources allocated are being increased annually, in particular, for strengthening national regulatory infrastructure and radioactive waste management system. During the past five years, more than 15 legislative acts with the aim of addressing unregulated safety and security related issues have been elaborated.

Independent regulatory body, established in the framework of implemented reforms effectively conducts its responsibilities, which is guaranteed by the legislative amendments preceded institutional changes.

The changes and initiatives were welcomed by the IRRS Mission Experts, Georgia hosted in February 2018. As it was stated in the report The IAEA Mission sees Significant Progress in Georgia's Regulatory Framework, Challenges Ahead. Recommendations and suggestions outlined by the experts will contribute to the effectiveness of national regulatory system.

While mentioning the IRRS Mission outcomes, we highly value contribution of the US Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the support of which made it possible to not only implement recommendations/suggestions, but, also, profound reforms. Technical, financial assistance and active contribution in developing national regulations and systems for nuclear and radiation safety that Georgia receives from US NRC are highly appreciated.

Let me also highlight several activities carried out in the framework of IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, such as providing cementing equipment that was installed in radioactive waste disposal facility of Georgia. National regulatory infrastructure is strengthened and supported fundamentally through national and regional projects. Such projects remain one of the core tools for development and sustaining knowledge in the fields covered by the Agency. Relevant parties actively participate in workshops, training courses and study visits through national regulatory body.

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to emphasize one of the successful projects implemented with the support of US Department of Energy in light of enhancing nuclear and radiation security. The role of DoE in supporting security system at radioactive waste storage and disposal facilities is of vital importance and more than worth highlighting.

Georgia attaches great importance to the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority's (SSM) responsibilities and the role of the SSM in the field of nuclear and radiation safety. In this context, we highly appreciate the valuable support and active cooperation that Georgia is receiving from the SSM. Since the orphan sources related issues constitute one of the core concerns with regard to ensuring worldwide security and safety, we highly appreciate the role of Swedish Radiation Safety Authority in carrying out searching operation at the village Anaseuli contaminated site. A number of orphan sources have been found and accordingly, we could avoid the possible threats and damages. We are now at the stage of analyzing and preparing the comprehensive plan for the full decontamination of the site. Moreover, with the active cooperation and substantial support of the European Union and Swedish Radiation Safety Authority, the plan on establishing new upgraded radioactive waste storage and processing facilities became implementable. The already signed project within Cooperation Agreement aims to establish unified repository – all the facilities for handling with radioactive waste at one location in order to ensure nuclear and radiation safety and security in accordance with international standards and best practice.

Madam President,

To sum up my statement, let me express our sincere appreciation and look forward to continuing our constructive and fruitful cooperation with the Secretariat, partners and Member states.

I thank you for your attention.