



**PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA TO THE OSCE,
UN AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN VIENNA**

S T A T E M E N T

by Ambassador H.E. Igor DJUNDEV

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Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

North Macedonia fully associates itself with the Statement delivered by Germany on behalf of the European Union. However, let me point out several issues of particular interest for my country.

I would like to use this opportunity to express our appreciation for the Agency's assistance in the implementation of our National Technical Co-operation Program.

The priority sectors of the Program had been tailored to highlight sectors where the IAEA's TC activities in the country can contribute within development priorities.

They have been revised accordingly, taking into account the increased efforts by the country to achieve compliance with relevant requirements for EU membership and relevant international development assistance, including the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

North Macedonia has developed and implemented a wide range of measures to strengthen the nuclear regulatory framework and infrastructure. It constantly improves its capabilities for combating illicit trafficking and measures for physical protection of nuclear and radioactive materials.

Speaking about the National Regulatory Infrastructure, the Radiation Safety Directorate, assisted by the Agency has made further progress in building

national capacities for effective radiation protection and nuclear safety.

In this context, Radiation Safety Directorate supported by the IAEA resolved an important issue in the area of radioactive waste management in the country - export of high activity disused sealed radioactive source of Category 1, Co-60 teletherapy source.

With regards to the ongoing Technical Cooperation Project Cycle 2020-2021, four National project concepts have been positively assessed and recommended by the IAEA Board of Governors for implementation. Two of the projects are in the field of medicine, the third one is in the field of Food safety and the fourth one refers to the Strengthening Central Level Capacities to Reduce Air Particulate Matter.

Mr. President, with IAEA assistance, North Macedonia improved the radiation protection of patients by strengthening the quality of positron emission tomography (PET) diagnostics for oncological and non-oncological patients. This was achieved by introducing new PET radiopharmaceuticals and establishing a dose tracking system for medical imaging modalities at the Institute of Physics.

An online system was also provided to the Institute of Physics to monitor patient doses and for remote quality control for mammography. These efforts helped to establish national diagnostic reference levels and will ultimately reduce the burden on national healthcare system, prevent unintended exposure for patients and staff, and improve the country's clinical and safety culture in medical settings.

Furthermore, the Institute of Public Health, upgraded its environmental and emergency radioactivity monitoring and reporting capacity. The Institute also improved its ability to assess potential isotope exposure by the general public, introduced regular monitoring and early warning network for nuclear medicine departments and industries working with naturally occurring radioactive materials.

Within the new Technical Cooperation Project Cycle 2022-2023, I am glad that three new National project concepts have been positively assessed and received a recommendation by the Agency's Secretariat for their further development into Project Designs. All three projects are in full compliance with our new Country Programme Framework 2019-2023, signed in December last year.

In the light of the COVID-19 pandemic, I would like to express our gratitude to the IAEA for the valuable assistance by providing diagnostic kits and equipment of nuclear-derived techniques for rapid detection as well as to the Government of Netherlands for its financial donation.

Thank you, Mr. President.