

## **STATEMENT BY ESTONIA**

### **65<sup>th</sup> Annual Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference**

**Mr. Tõnis Mölder**  
**Minister of Environment**

**Vienna, 20 September 2021**

#### **Distinguished President,**

I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as President of the 65<sup>th</sup> General Conference. I assure you our full support and cooperation.

Estonia fully aligns itself with the EU statement delivered by Slovenia. I would like to highlight some key points for Estonia.

In the context of the ongoing pandemic situation, we would like to commend the Director General and the Agency for the action taken in response to the Covid-19 crisis. Estonia welcomes the decision to devote this year's Scientific Forum to Preparing for Zoonotic Outbreaks and the Role of Nuclear Science.

Another challenge, that is affecting multilateral and regional stability, is climate change. Estonia is strongly committed to shifting towards more climate-friendly energy to become a net-zero-emissions country by 2050.

Thus, in April 2021, Estonian Government established a national Working Group to consider the introduction of nuclear power generation in Estonia beyond 2030, paying particular attention to new nuclear technologies. In order to make a knowledge-based and transparent decision, cooperation with the Agency and engagement of relevant stakeholders, Members of the Public and neighbouring countries are essential.

Effective response to global challenges such as climate change and environmental disasters requires globally comparable, accessible and interoperable data. In March 2019, countries all over the world agreed to develop a global environmental data strategy for 2025 during the 4<sup>th</sup> UN Environment Assembly. To support this process, Estonia has announced a new

cooperation initiative the Data for the Environment Alliance – or DEAL for short. DEAL will be a coalition of state and non-state actors who collaborate on environmental data and digital solutions, improve national data management capacities across the globe and support the UN Environment Program in developing a global environmental data strategy. We invite everyone to join in and collaborate actively with the alliance.

Estonia adheres to the valuable role of the Agency in strengthening the international nuclear safety and security framework and assisting states in nuclear capacity building. We have gained valuable knowledge and expertise through the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme and benefit from the diversity of nuclear science and technology in medicine, industry and education.

We appreciate and support the Agency's new initiatives – ZODIAC and NUTEC Plastics and look forward to the implementation of these Programmes for the benefit of the Member States.

Currently, our main challenge is to build a radioactive waste disposal facility into Estonia by 2040. In the first week of September, Estonia hosted the Agency's expert mission on radioactive waste management roadmap that provided valuable advice for long term management of this type of waste.

Estonia fully recognizes the role of the Agency in ensuring that nuclear material and technology are used only for peaceful purposes. We support universal implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and stress the essence of the Agency's safeguards system in this process.

At this crucial time, Estonia continues to support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and the Agency's long-term mission of verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear related commitments.

### **Distinguished President, Ladies and Gentlemen**

To conclude, I want to express our appreciation of the work done by the Director General and the Secretariat, and we call upon all countries to support the Agency in these efforts.

Thank you!