

Mr. President,

Congratulations on your election to preside over the IAEA General Conference – I can assure you of Hungary's full support.

Let me start by thanking the IAEA for carrying on its important work in spite of COVID-19 restrictions. I also commend the Agency for its COVID-19 emergency response efforts, as well as for its ZODIAC initiative that provides member states with appropriate nuclear derived techniques that support the early detection, prevention and control of certain zoonotic outbreaks and thus strengthens their preparedness and capabilities.

We consistently emphasize that every state has the right to choose its energy mix, suitable for its own needs and capabilities. According to Hungary's new Energy Strategy and National Energy and Climate Plan, nuclear energy remains a key component of a cost-effective, climate-friendly, safe and stable energy mix that helps us meet our environmental goals, including the very ambitious target of having 90% of our power generation become carbon-neutral by 2030. Nuclear energy is the backbone of our electricity system with around 50% of total domestic production. With the two new nuclear power plant units at Paks that are based on the highest international and IAEA standards and expected to be connected to the Hungarian national electricity grid by 2029-2030, this contribution can be maintained in the long run.

Even despite the extreme situation of the pandemic, there has been no delay in the construction of the two new power plant units of the Paks II. Project either. As a vital milestone in the construction process, the licensee of the project submitted the construction license application to the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority in June last year. The Authority has also involved national and international experts, including the IAEA, in the thorough examination process. Having completed the assessment, the Authority is expected to issue the license in the near future.

Meeting the maximum safety and security requirements in already existing nuclear facilities is also our top priority. Nuclear safety is ensured by comprehensive regulation and multi-tiered, complex supporting systems and operating mechanisms. Regarding nuclear security, Hungary believes that it is essential to maintain the central role of the Agency in this field and provide it with the required resources. We are further committed to receive new IAEA advisory missions in Hungary. We hope that these can be realized even under the current, challenging conditions.

We take pride in the fact that our Centre of Energy Research has recently been redesignated as an IAEA Collaborating Centre for Nuclear Forensics, which we view as a recognition of our contribution to the Agency's work in this important area.

In line with the particular importance Hungary attaches to nuclear security, we continue to serve as the convener of the Nuclear Security Contact Group and we will host the next Plenary Meeting of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism.

Hungary strongly supports international cooperation and the mutual sharing of experience also within the framework of the IAEA Technical Cooperation (TC). In the last 30 years we have also taken an active part in the IAEA's Safeguards Support Programme. We have been assisting in the training of international professionals in accordance with the IAEA training program by providing locations for in-field trainings. Furthermore, equipment and measurement methods developed for domestic conditions helped international safeguards inspectors during the verification of Hungarian and foreign facilities as well. Fully in line with IAEA principles, Hungary is also working on a series of „Memorandum of understanding on co-operation in the field of training and education of atomic industry on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy” with interested IAEA partner countries, which could pave the way to intensifying cooperation in nuclear training and education.

Hungary supports the aim of the international community to ensure the peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear programme. We are fully aware of the complexity of the situation related to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, the implementation of which we continue to support. We also support the IAEA in its work in this regard as well as its efforts in implementing Iran's Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol in a dedicated and impartial fashion. We urge Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA in clarifying all outstanding issues of safeguards relevance.

Finally, I wish to express Hungary's appreciation for the work that the IAEA is doing in promoting the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy. Hungary has always been and will be a partner in these efforts.