



STATEMENT OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina
H.E. Mr Josip BRKIĆ

AT THE 65th GENERAL CONFERENCE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

21 September 2021

Mr. President,

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen

On behalf of the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, I would like to congratulate H.E. Mr. Sadiq Marafi, the Permanent Representative of Kuwait to the IAEA on his election as the President of the 65rd General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. I assure you, Mr. President, of the full cooperation of my Delegation during this Conference.

At the outset, I would like to thank Director General, Rafaelo Grossi, for his professionalism in leading the Agency during this unprecedented and challenging period we have been experiencing and still are. We all note with appreciation that the Agency has continued its very effective work in difficult circumstances.

Bosnia and Herzegovina fully aligns itself with the Statement of the European Union delivered on the first day of the Conference. Now, allow me to address some issues relevant to the Agenda of the Conference, and those of vital importance to my country.

Mr. President,

Bosnia and Herzegovina remains vigilant by the decision of the Republic of Croatia to select Čerkezovac as a preferred location for the disposal of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel of the Krško Nuclear Power Plant.

Located in the municipality of Dvor on Trgovska Gora, Čerkezovac is in the close proximity to the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Natural Park of Una River. Given this, it is an issue of importance for my country.

There is a unanimous position within my country of the radioactive waste disposal in the immediate vicinity of the border, and we question Trgovska Gora as a potential location for storage of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel. This location, according to experts, potentially poses a threat to the health of residents in 13 municipalities, threat of a potentially devastating environmental impact, and justified concerns that, due to the high risk of earthquakes, this location does not meet intended purpose.

Mr. President,

We still hope it will open avenue for more constructive and inclusive dialogue, including also an opportunity for a substantive engagement of Bosnia and Herzegovina in all related activities, field research and analysis. We strongly believe that joining the respective expertise of both countries would be beneficial for the resolution of this sensitive and important issue.

Bosnia and Herzegovina is fully committed to resolving this important issue, in accordance with the provisions of ESPOO Convention, which regulates cross-border environmental impacts, and of which we are members.

We remains committed to resolving this issue with the Republic of Croatia in the spirit of good neighborly relations, respect for mutual interests and through dialogue, both bilaterally and in a multilateral environment.

Mr. President,

As for the engagement of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the activities, programs and initiatives related to the IAEA field of work and focus, allow me to express the support of my country to the Agency's efforts for ZODIAC initiative, an integrated, systematic framework for contributing to the fight against zoonotic diseases, particularly in view of the critical importance of preventing such diseases worldwide, and the significant role that nuclear science has to play. We welcome the progress in the implementation of zoonotic disease integrated action since its launching in June 2020 and share the enthusiasm for its development. In this sense, the Scientific Forum 2021 on Preparing for Zoonotic Outbreaks: the role of Nuclear Science in this Global Initiative is a great opportunity for its further promotion. On our part, Bosnia and Herzegovina has designated National coordinators and experts as well as two laboratories to conduct the activities of this initiative. At this stage, we are waiting for the IAEA confirmation to evaluate the needs of those labs and support them.

Bosnia and Herzegovina also welcomes a new Agency initiative in the area of environmental protection. Nuclear Technology for Controlling Plastic Pollution

(NUTEK Plastic) is a yet another inventive activity of the Agency, which aims to integrate nuclear techniques and address plastic pollution.

Although not a nuclear country, Bosnia and Herzegovina has invested significant effort to be a valuable member of this Organization, and intends to further strengthen its legal and regulatory framework related to nuclear and radiation safety and security in line with international standards.

Bosnia and Herzegovina expresses its strong commitment to continue our cooperation with the Technical Cooperation Department in order to improve and strengthen our national capabilities in the safe use of nuclear technology in medical, industry, agriculture, veterinary and radiation protection and nuclear safety and security.

The Technical Cooperation (TC) Program presents the key Agency mechanism for technology transfer and capacity building in the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology to meet Member States' needs. Its funding should therefore be guaranteed, sufficient and predictable. For its part, Bosnia and Herzegovina has paid its annual contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) in full and on time.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me thank the Director General and the Agency staff for their diligent work and professionalism in the preparation of this 65 th regular session of the general Conference.

I thank you for your attention.