

67th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference

Statement of the Czech Republic

Delivered by Ms. Dana DRÁBOVÁ

Chairperson of the State Office for Nuclear Safety

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Madam President,

Congratulations you on your election. I assure you of our full support.

Czechia fully aligns itself with the EU statement and would like to stress the following.

First, let me welcome new Member States Cabo Verde and Gambia.

I also sincerely congratulate Director General Grossi on his reappointment. We look forward to our continued close cooperation.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Global situation is not changing for the better. Growing tensions, profound divisions and polarisation are on the rise.

Once again, this Conference is taking place against the backdrop of Russia's war of aggression against its neighbour, Ukraine.

Threats to non-proliferation architecture aggravate and increase in numbers.

A strong support for the motto "Atoms for Peace and Development" is more important than ever, 70 years after the famous speech of President Eisenhower, which led to the establishment of this very Agency.

It is therefore an honour to be here today to reaffirm our shared commitment to the Agency's mission and to express our tremendous gratitude to the Director General and his staff for their dedicated work and acknowledge their expertise, professionalism and impartiality.

Madam President,

For the first time in the humankind history, a nuclear power plant is illegally occupied and weaponized. It is absolutely deplorable and irresponsible. Even more so when done by a nuclear-weapon state and a designated member of the Board.

It is Russia who holds this deplorable primacy accompanied by irresponsible nuclear intimidation. It shows a blatant disrespect to the international law, Board of Governors' resolutions and the very principles of the IAEA Statute that we all pledged to respect and protect.

Russia must withdraw from the entire territory of Ukraine and end the tragedy it has inflicted.

Madam President,

The application of safeguards remains to be an indispensable tool for ensuring global peace and security. We fully support it. This core mission should continue unimpaired.

The non-proliferation framework shall be strengthened, not weakened. We join many others in our call for the universalisation of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol.

The escalation of Iran's nuclear programme to an alarming level – clearly beyond credible civilian justification – is a cause of grave concern.

We urge Iran to reverse this trajectory and immediately fulfil its legal obligations and commitments, cooperate fully with the Agency in earnest and in a sustained way and clarify all outstanding safeguards issues.

This includes reversing detrimental steps, such as withdrawal of several experienced Agency inspectors' designations

Madam President,

Moving on to the peaceful uses, some of the major challenges, such as climate change, only highlight their importance.

Nuclear power plants are amongst the safest, cleanest and most reliable means of energy production. Czechia is a vocal advocate and supporter of nuclear energy.

In combination with renewable sources, it presents clear path to climate neutrality. Hence, we endorse the efforts to highlight its role in tackling climate change, including at COP28.

Turning now to nuclear safety,

As the CNS President, I am pleased to state that the successful consensual outcome of the Joint 8th & 9th Review Meeting demonstrates clearly that the nuclear safety conventions remain relevant in the current context.

I thank all Contracting Parties for their commitment and constructive engagement that enabled such an outcome.

The importance of services designed to help countries strengthen and enhance their regulatory framework for safety cannot be underestimated.

After successful IRRS mission in May, we are preparing for the ARTEMIS mission that follows in a back-to-back manner. Successful INSARR follow-up mission also took place this year.

Madam President,

Certain countries tend to criticize an excessive politicization of technical aspects. Yet, they pursue what they criticize.

Just two examples for all: AUKUS and the discharge of ALPS treated water at the Fukushima-Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

It is essential to respect the Secretariat's role and responsibilities. This includes the mandate to directly engage with Member States, in particular with regard to safeguards framework.

We reiterate our satisfaction with and confidence in the Agency's continued impartial, independent and objective approach. It helps to refute any possible concerns.

We therefore refuse any calls for the establishment of parallel structures. AUKUS should be addressed within the existing international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

We are convinced that the ALPS treated water discharge is taking place transparently, in line with international safety standards under independent and objective supervision of the Agency.

Data show that it poses no real risk for human health and environment. In this context, Japan and the IAEA have our full trust.

Madam President,

We recognize and appreciate the role of the IAEA in making the world a better place. One cannot on one side speak about the essential nature of the Agency's work and on the other not pay contributions in full and on time so that this indispensable work can continue and is not jeopardized.

We are severely concerned by the reported serious liquidity challenge the Agency is facing. We call on all Member States to honour their obligations.

Czechia has been a staunch supporter of the Agency since its foundation. Not only in words but in deeds. This year, we have almost tripled the overall amount of our voluntary contributions.

We also demonstrate our support by active engagement. Here I wish to express our sincere appreciation to all Member States for your support and trust in our Board of Governors' Chairmanship.

I congratulate Ambassador Šrámek for his excellent work as the Chair of the Board. He exercised his duties with outmost responsibility.

As per the Statute, this Agency is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its members. We shall therefore strive to remedy the unresolved situation to ensure to all of them the rights and benefits resulting from their membership.

Madam President,

To conclude, let me reiterate our support to the Agency and its mandate. It is more important now than ever.

Facts should not be distorted and politics should listen to science, not vice versa.

I thank you and wish all of us a productive week.