



SLOVAKIA

National Statement
The 67th Session of the IAEA General Conference

Delivered by the Head of Delegation
Dr. Marta ŽIAKOVÁ
Chairperson
Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic

Vienna, 25 September 2023

Madam President,

1. Let me congratulate you on your election as the President of this session of the Conference and assure you of my delegation's full support in discharging your duties to navigate this conference to its successful outcome.
2. Slovakia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Spain on behalf of the EU. In addition, allow me to make a few remarks of particular importance to my country in a national capacity.

Madam President,

3. The ongoing illegal and brutal war of aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine continues to seriously undermine nuclear safety and security of Ukrainian's nuclear facilities and increases the risk of potential nuclear or radiological accident. Slovakia strongly condemns Russia's full-scale invasion grossly violating international law, the UN Charter and the principles of the IAEA Statute. We once again reaffirm our full solidarity with Ukraine and full support and recognition for its independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders.
4. Slovakia regards the IAEA's activities in Ukraine and commends its unwavering commitment and tireless efforts in assisting Ukraine to maintain nuclear safety and security, in particular at the Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) which continues to be illegally occupied by the Russian forces and where all IAEA 7 indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security have been repeatedly compromised. We continue to be deeply concerned about the situation. We underscore the importance of the IAEA Support and Assistance Mission to Zaporizhzhia (ISAMZ) and reiterate our full support of the five basic principles for the protection of ZNPP outlined by the Director General at the UN Security Council meeting in May 2023. The dedication, commitment and professionalism of Agency's staff in present at the Ukrainian nuclear facilities on-site is particularly

commendable and essential in informing and providing impartial assessment to the public and international community of the situation at the ZNPP. In this regard, Slovakia wishes to announce that it will provide financial contribution to support the Agency's activities in Ukraine.

5. Slovakia remains strongly committed to the NPT as the cornerstone of global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture, with an important role in advancing the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Preserving the integrity of the NPT regime in the current severely deteriorated security environment is of the utmost importance. The IAEA safeguards have an essential function in this context, with Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements and the Additional Protocol constituting the current verification standard. We appreciate the Agency's impartial role in the implementation of safeguards and verification.
6. We are concerned by the continued escalation of Iran's nuclear program inconsistent with the JCPOA commitments. The decision by Iran to withdraw the official designation of several experienced IAEA inspectors to monitor and verify its nuclear program is particularly worrying as it severely impacts the Agency's ability to conduct its verification activities. We urge Iran to return to a path of cooperation and towards the fulfillment of the commitments contained in the March 2023 Joint Statement, and to resolve all outstanding safeguards issues.

Nuclear Power, Energy and Climate Change

Madam President,

7. Today, in the midst of the geopolitical energy realities, nuclear energy continues to demonstrate its pivotal and irreplaceable role for many countries, including Slovakia. It is a necessary, safe, stable and carbon-free source of energy that can complement the variable sources of renewable energy on electrical grids and has the capacity to address the world energy problems. Its indispensable role is

becoming more and more significant as the impact of climate change grows increasingly dramatic and the need to decarbonize all the more urgent.

8. Nuclear power has a long-lasting position in the Slovak energy mix and will continue to be a strategic imperative and a key component of my country's energy policy in years to come. Slovakia has reached yet another milestone in its nuclear power programme over the past year. Unit 3 of the Mochovce NPP has successfully reached the commissioning phase followed by a first connection to the grid in January this year and is presently operating at 100% capacity, accounting for approx. 13% of Slovakia's total electricity consumption. This will increase the nation's overall reliance on nuclear energy production in the energy mix up to substantial 67% and will lead us towards self-sufficiency in terms of electricity. Thanks to nuclear power plants in particular, Slovakia has one of the cleanest energy mixes in the world.
9. Further in the context of nuclear power, the subject of SMRs remains highly topical for Slovakia. We actively engage in bilateral cooperation with other Member States on SMR-related innovations and advancements and continue to track their developments through multiple forums, including the Agency's NHSI Initiative, as an important part of Slovakia's efforts in field of SMRs.

Nuclear and Radiation Safety, Security and Non-proliferation

Madam President,

10. Development and use of nuclear and radiation technologies requires vigorous adherence to safety and security standards. The IAEA plays a central role in providing global reference for enhancing nuclear safety, radiation protection and security framework, in particular through the development of the safety standards and guidance for nuclear security. Slovakia is strongly committed to these principles and constantly strives for improvement by, inter alia, regularly inviting the IAEA's peer review and advisory services missions. We've hosted the second

round of the IRRS mission last September followed by the ARTEMIS mission this February conducted in a back-to-back format with both missions, affirming Slovakia's commitment to a high level of safety. In field of radiation protection, the ORPAS mission last July confirmed our efforts in strengthening occupational radiation protection.

Nuclear Applications, Technology & Technical Cooperation

11. Slovakia is a staunch supporter of the IAEA's mandate in advancing the peaceful uses of the atom, while tackling global challenges and providing lasting solutions in wide range of areas, including environment, human health, energy and climate change. We attach great relevance to the vital role both nuclear power and non-power applications play in addressing socio-economic and sustainable development objectives, as well as in fulfillment of the SDGs and the 2030 Agenda. To that end, the IAEA's Technical Cooperation (TC) Programme remains to be highly beneficial to us, mainly in field of capacity building and knowledge transfer. We therefore echo our support of a demand-driven, efficient, non-discriminatory and need-based programme. Slovakia invites all IAEA's Member States to continue sharing the latest scientific developments and best practices in emerging technologies to ensure high level of safety and security globally.

12. We commend the IAEA Director General's proactive approach and his flagship initiatives providing added value in utilizing nuclear technologies for the benefit of mankind, especially in fighting cancer, anchoring high level of nuclear and radiation safety and security, or advancing the benefits of innovative technologies, including the SMRs, in contribution to reach net zero by 2050. Slovakia applauds the Agency for its important endeavors in this respect and we will continue to follow them closely with interest.

Madam President,

13. To conclude, Slovakia wishes to reiterate its strong and continued support to the Agency in managing its statutory functions in an effective and efficient manner. We

also welcome the inclusive approach, inclusion of gender mainstreaming and systematic strive towards reaching gender equality across the Agency's activities.

Thank you.