

STATEMENT BY
MINISTER OF ENERGY OF UKRAINE
GERMAN GALUSHCHENKO
at the 67th General Conference
of the International Atomic Energy Agency
Agenda Item 8 General Debate

25 September 2023

Dear Mr President,
Director General,
Excellencies, Distinguished colleagues,

Nuclear power technologies are an essence of achievements of the humankind. But what is nuclear energy was associated with today?

We can think about several words like availability, low footprint, energy security, and they are essential to fighting climate change and decarbonization.

We are talking more and more about the renaissance of nuclear energy and what we need for the Renaissance.

We need to construct new units. We need to get innovations. We need new technologies like SMRs and other developments. We need qualified personnel. We need a new generation of people involved in the nuclear sphere in nuclear development.

I can tell you one story: that is the story of a boy who was ten years old. His name was Viktor, and he lived in Zaporizhzhya in a family of engineers. In ten years, he drew a picture of the Zaporizhzhya NPP and wanted to become an engineer. On the night of October, two o'clock at night, he was killed by a Russian missile, as well as another kid. Three more girls were wounded, and four boys were heavily wounded. Not older than 16 years old.

That is the story of Ukraine today. That is the story of how Russia takes the future of Ukraine. That is not only about the world of Ukraine and Russia.

As of today, Russia has killed more than 500 kids in Ukraine. Children who could probably become engineers, scientists and even new reactor designers.

But will never do so.

I want to remind you of the disaster in Chernobyl. Everyone knows the word "Chernobyl," and 200,000 square kilometers were influenced by radiation, 8.5 million people were exposed to extensive radiation doses.

The consequences of this disaster were felt as far as Sweden and Finland. And that was just one reactor. At the Zaporizhzhya NPP, we have six reactors, so in case of a major nuclear accident at the Zaporizhzhya NPP, those figures will be counted in millions, as millions of people will be affected around the world.

I remind you that Zaporizhzhya NPP was in blackout seven times due to the shelling. And I am grateful to Rafael that he mentioned this.

That is not again how much blackouts should we wait for a nuclear accident.

And, of course, any small accident on the Zaporizhzhya NPP could stop the renaissance of the nuclear energy and even the development of the whole sphere.

If a major accident occurs, the consequences will be felt beyond Ukraine. I am sure even beyond Europe.

Everything we mentioned as the future of nuclear energy can become a past.

The future of the nuclear renaissance is decided today in Ukraine. Right now, it is decided in Ukraine.

We must return to the basic principles of nuclear safety and security that Russia destroyed. Just today, at this conference, I am grateful for the support of almost all of you in relation to the situation that we have at Zaporizhzhya NPP.

However, we discussed the violation of the nuclear safety and security rules, rules deliberately violated by one of the IAEA members.

I want to refer to the board of governors' resolutions, there were three on Ukraine requesting Russia to immediately cease all actions at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and any other nuclear facilities in Ukraine for the competent Ukrainian authorities to regain full control over the nuclear facilities within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders, including the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant to ensure their safe and secure operation.

And what was the answer? The Russian reaction was exactly the opposite.

I want to thank Mr. Grossi, and really, he is a big friend of Ukraine. He did a lot of work, especially his tremendous job, for the sake of stealing the situation on the station.

I would also like to thank the IAEA experts for their brave presence at the Zaporizhzhya NPP and other Ukraine nuclear power plants, making a significant contribution to the nuclear security on the continent.

On the first visit to the Zaporizhzhya NPP by the expert of IAEA, they showed the report, which confirmed the violation of all seven pillars of nuclear safety and security. And to really show what is happening on this site. We had no time to wait.

The situation does not look like it would normalize itself. So, we need actions and actions right now.

Ukraine's goal is, of course, the full de-occupation of the station and deep involvement of the experts of the IAEA.

We need to think about the real strategy and the power of the IAEA as an organization. I think that with the challenge today, the IAEA should have more power.

Of course, the return of all seven pillars of nuclear safety security, and we should think about the demilitarized zone around the Zaporizhzhya NPP.

Finally, we need to find an answer to one question: how can we advance our nuclear ambitions if we cannot ensure nuclear safety and security? And that is a big question for all the countries around the world.

Excellences, President, I want to thank your countries for your solidarity, and that you stand with Ukraine, you are with us. We feel through support, through your positions on different international forums.

Of course, I encourage all members to participate in President Zelensky's peace formula. Its first item is focused on nuclear and radiation safety.

I want you to become a part of this discussion because we need to create some new mechanism for the future, and with great hope that we will work together.

It is very important for us to find solutions essential for the global development of peaceful nuclear energy.

Thank you very much!