

Statement by Mr. Aziz Nazar, Deputy Minister of Industry and New Technologies of the Republic of Tajikistan at the 68th session of the IAEA General Conference

Mr. President,

Distinguished DG Grossi,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mr. President and Vice-Presidents, please accept my congratulations on your appointments for the 68th General Conference of IAEA. On behalf our delegation, I wish you success in your work.

We are grateful to the Director General and the IAEA staff for their professional work in promoting peaceful use of nuclear energy and ensuring non-proliferation.

Mr. President,

Ever since joining the IAEA in 2001, Republic of Tajikistan has established a strong partnership with the organization.

IAEA's support in establishing and enhancing oncology centers in Tajikistan has given a beacon of hope to countless patients and has uplifted the standards of cancer care in Tajikistan. The IAEA's invaluable expertise and resources, including the new Rays of Hope initiative, have been instrumental in the progressive transformation of our oncological facilities, allowing our medical professionals to deliver world-class treatment to our citizens.

The IAEA's ZODIAC Program has been instrumental in strengthening our capabilities to monitor and control zoonotic diseases. We have advanced our understanding and management of

zoonotic diseases in established Zodiac National Laboratory (ZNL), ensuring safer environmental conditions.

Another noticeable area of our partnership is the study for mitigation of glacier-related risks. The IAEA's expertise have equipped us with better understanding of the challenges posed by glacier retreat and its impact on water resources, enabling us to address these issues more effectively.

We consider the IAEA's involvement in this regard as worthy contribution to the implementation of the objectives of the 2025 International Year of Glaciers Preservation initiated by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, and adopted by the UN General Assembly Resolution in December 2022.

Conference dedicated to the International Year of Glaciers is planned in 2025 in Tajikistan and we hope to cooperate with IAEA and other key partners in carrying out this high-level international event.

We fully support the activities of the Agency and are determined to make our maximum contribution to their successful implementation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The legacy of uranium mining and production in Tajikistan has an impact on the entire Central Asian region. Resolving this is issue an important task of growing urgency, else the release of radioactive and toxic waste into rivers in densely populated areas is inevitable. As radioactive pollution knows no borders it is imperative that the affected countries and the international community join forces and act before irreversible damage occurs.

The National Concept states that all radiation-contaminated objects in the waste sites require urgent remediation actions due to

their harmful effects on public wellbeing and the environment, as well as the high potential for emergency incidents.

It is gratifying that these sites are incorporated in the Strategic Master Plan for Uranium Legacy Sites, also in its next phase, prepared under the leadership of the IAEA.

In its turn the Government of Tajikistan is developing and adopting the second state program for the period of 2025-2030 (the first ends at the end of 2024) to remediate territories affected by uranium mining.

We are very grateful to the IAEA (CGULS) staff for their assistance in drafting the program and hope for further cooperation and technical support from the IAEA to equip the laboratory of the Specialized Center for Radioactive Waste Management in accordance with the assessment of the IAEA mission in May of this year and post-remediation monitoring of restored sites.

Dear Colleagues,

The Republic of Tajikistan places paramount importance on maintaining a robust regulatory framework to ensure nuclear and radiation safety, security, and safeguards.

Our regulatory authority has been steadfast in implementing stringent safety measures, conducting regular inspections, and ensuring compliance with both national and international standards.

This commitment to effective regulation is critical to protecting public health and the environment while promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technologies. We continuously strengthen our capabilities in nuclear security, in collaboration with international partners such as the IAEA, to prevent unauthorized access, theft, or misuse of nuclear and radioactive materials.

Furthermore, our regulatory authority plays a pivotal role in inspecting and overseeing remediation activities related to legacy uranium sites, ensuring that the processes align with international best practices and safety standards.

Regular monitoring and assessment of these remediation efforts are essential in mitigating the risks posed by radioactive contamination and ensuring the long-term safety of the environment and public health.

In addition, our regulatory body ensures that the implementation of safeguards agreements is fully compliant, further promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and fulfilling our obligations under the non-proliferation regime.

In October 2024, the Government of Tajikistan, under the leadership of our President, will inaugurate a new facility dedicated to the Scientific and Technical Support Organization (STSO) to the Regulatory Authority.

This landmark event is a testament to the high-level commitment of the Government to address the critical issues of nuclear and radiation safety, security, and safeguards.

The establishment of this facility will further enhance the regulatory authority's capacity to perform its essential duties, ensuring a more secure and safer environment for current and future generations.

In addition, our regulatory body ensures the full compliance of safeguards agreements, promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and fulfilling our obligations under the non-proliferation regime.

Tajikistan is also home to a Regional Training Facility for Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Non-Proliferation and Export Control, which has significantly contributed to capacity building.

This facility plays a crucial role in building the capacity of our region by training more than 500 representatives annually from regulatory authorities, operators, law-enforcement agencies, military organizations, and other key stakeholders.

The training programs provided at this facility strengthen the region's ability to effectively prevent the proliferation of WMDs and improve coordination among stakeholders responsible for enforcing export controls and safeguarding security."

Excellencies,

Despite a clear directive of the Agency's Statute to ensure the sovereign equality of all its members, the issue of Member States not belonging to any geographic area has been disregarded since the founding of the IAEA.

We believe that each member state should have equal opportunities to take part in all Agency's decision-making processes, be elected to the Board of Governors, Bureau of the General Conference and contribute to the work of the Agency.

In this regard I would like to inform you that recently Tajikistan has submitted its instrument of ratification of the Amendment to the Article 6 of the IAEA Statute to depositary Government and we call upon all Member States and the IAEA Secretariat to contribute in resolving the existing problem and taking immediate actions to restore the implementation of fundamental principles of the UN Charter and the IAEA Statute. **I thank you.**