

Statement on behalf of the Euratom Community

delivered on 21 September 2017 by

**Mr Didier Lenoir, Ambassador of the European Union to
the International Organisations in Vienna**

on the occasion of the

61st General Conference of the IAEA, Vienna

Miss president, Mr Director General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me begin by congratulating you, Madame President, on your election as President of this General Conference.

We welcome the comprehensive role that the International Atomic Energy Agency plays in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and its efforts to advance global nuclear safety and security. The cooperation between the IAEA and the Euratom Community is long and well-established.

I would like to take the opportunity today to highlight some of the European Union's policy priorities and actions

Nuclear Safety

For the European Union, the continuous improvement of nuclear safety, is an essential principle to ensure we meet the highest standards.

This principle has been reflected in our amended Nuclear Safety Directive which came into full effect this August and a number of major actions have been taken since last year in order to translate this principle into concrete actions.

- We have launched a first Topical Peer review in Europe on **ageing management** from February this year to August 2018
- **Regarding the Fukushima stress tests follow up**, all participating countries have committed to updating their National Action Plans (NACPs) by the end of 2017.

- **A nuclear safety objective has been introduced** that calls for implementation of safety improvements, fully in line with the principles of the Vienna declaration.

Standardisation and quality control

We also would like to underline the importance of an **efficient nuclear supply chain with appropriate quality control**. Several initiatives have already been launched to facilitate standardisation and better regulation.

SMRs

Among the different types of reactor under design development, **Small and Modular Reactors (SMRs) offer promising perspectives to ensure both high nuclear safety and production sustainability**.

Spent fuel, radioactive waste and decommissioning

The management of radioactive waste and spent fuel is a major challenge to be tackled by industry and regulators in the coming decades. **Decisions on how we will ensure the long term management of spent fuel and radioactive waste are needed**

Iran

The European Commission is actively contributing to the implementation of the (JCPoA). A successful high-level seminar with Iran addressing the linkages between nuclear governance and nuclear safety has already been organised, and the Iranian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (INRA) and the Bushehr Nuclear Power Plant operator (BNPPP) will receive further support from the European Commission.

The European Commission is also providing assistance to Iran's accession to those international nuclear governance conventions which Iran is not yet a party to.

Nuclear Security

Let me now turn to the issue of Nuclear Security. We welcome the successful outcomes of the December 2016 Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security.

The Commission has continued its support and collaboration with the IAEA in the field of detection of nuclear materials, nuclear forensics and training for front-line offices. The EU CBRN Centres of Excellence, have taken a stronger role in the regions.

We welcome the recent opening of the IAEA LEU Bank in Kazakhstan, to which the EU made a contribution of €25 million.

Safeguards

Regarding nuclear Safeguards, the European Commission cooperates closely with the IAEA in **implementing the State-Level-Approaches** in the European Union. It also cooperates with the IAEA outside Europe.

Euratom safeguards has established that in the Euratom Community in 2016 there was neither diversion of nuclear materials from their intended use nor was there any failure in meeting all legal obligations towards Third Countries as well as the IAEA.

Nuclear Non-power Applications, including the supply of medical radioisotopes

The EU continues to support the development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy and the advancement of nuclear science in different fields, including medicine, industry and technology.

In February this year the European Commission signed practical arrangements with the IAEA to enhance technical collaboration in these areas.

The European Commission will, in the first half of 2018, organize an international conference to discuss the challenges we face in these fields and plans to develop **proposals for action in an EU Strategic Agenda for Medical, Industrial and Research of nuclear and radiation technology (SAMIRA)**.

Research and training

The Euratom Research and Training Programme for the years 2014-2018 continues to focus on improving nuclear safety, radioactive waste management, radiation protection and nuclear education and training.

ITER

Fusion energy research is part of the energy policy agenda of the European Union. **The EU has assumed a leading role in the ITER project.**

On 14 June, the European Commission published a Communication on the progress of the ITER project detailing the recent developments, in particular the construction progress at the site and the impact of the project's revised schedule on the European contribution. We now foresee that the First Plasma will be reached in 2025.

I would like to reassure you of Europe's continued commitment towards ITER's success.

Mr President, Mr Director General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Nuclear safety, security, and safeguards are a concern for the whole international community: for those countries which use civil nuclear power and those which do not. We need a common understanding of the relevant issues and we need close co-operation in resolving them.

We must take full advantage of the IAEA's over 60 years' accumulated experience and its continuous contribution to developing nuclear power in a safe and sustainable manner.

Thank you for your attention.