

Statement on behalf of
Hungary

Delivered by

Mr András Aradszki
Minister of State for Energy Affairs
Ministry of National Development

At the 59th General Conference of the
International Atomic Energy Agency

14 September 2015

Vienna, Austria

Mr President,

1. On behalf of the Hungarian Delegation, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations to you on your election to the Presidency of the 59th Session of the IAEA General Conference. I wish to assure you of Hungary's full support in making it a success.

My delegation is pleased to welcome Turkmenistan, Antigua and Barbuda and Barbados as new members of the Agency. Hungary fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union.

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,

2. Among the many challenges the world is facing in the early twenty-first century, climate change remains one of the major problems that must be addressed by all nations at a multilateral level. Governments around the world are preparing to negotiate a universal agreement at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Paris at the end of the year. In our view, nuclear power has an essential role to play in making progress towards a low-carbon economy. For this reason, we believe that over the course of current discussions, more emphasis must be placed on the role of nuclear power and the contribution it can make to combat climate change.

3. Touching upon another issue of global significance, Hungary welcomes the Agreement of 14 July between the E3+3 and Iran on a *Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action* and strongly supports the IAEA's long-term mission of verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear-related commitments contained in this Agreement.

Mr President,

I would like to take this opportunity to address some issues relevant to the Agenda of the General Conference from our national perspective.

4. Considering international and EU emission targets, challenges of security of supply and our country's current energy structure, Hungary opted for the long-term maintenance of nuclear power in its energy mix. The lifetime extension programme of the Paks NPP is being carried out duly: in December 2014, the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority granted a license to extend the operating lifetime of Unit 2 of the nuclear power plant by twenty years until 2034. On the basis of the Hungarian-Russian Intergovernmental Agreement concluded in 2014 on the construction of two new nuclear power plant units, three implementation agreements were signed in December 2014 that stipulate contractual obligations and conditions of the new-build project at the Paks site.

5. Earlier this year in April, upon the initiative of the Hungarian Government a roundtable discussion with the IAEA in Vienna was organized. It provided an excellent opportunity for senior government officials and policy makers to share experiences and exchange information on the Paks NPP capacity maintenance project and to explore concrete areas of mutual co-operation. As a follow-up to our discussions, we intend to conclude a Practical Arrangement with the Agency to establish a solid framework for strengthening our cooperation with the Agency in the area of nuclear power.

6. Hungary attaches special emphasis on creating and sustaining a sound legislative and regulatory framework on ensuring nuclear and radiation safety and security. Accordingly, relevant legislation was approved earlier this year to increase the number of personnel of the regulatory body to fulfil future tasks related to the capacity maintenance project of the Paks NPP.

Furthermore, the Government decided to invite the IAEA to send an expert mission, in the framework of its Integrated Regulatory Review Service to assess the Hungarian regulatory system and practices in light of recommended IAEA standards.

I am confident that the findings will help us improve the activities of the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority and other competent authorities to further enhance nuclear safety and security. Based on the review mission report we will finalize our Action Plan that will be implemented in the following years.

7. The Agency also conducted an independent expert mission to assess the operational safety of the Paks NPP for the third time in the history of Paks. Hungary considers the outcomes of the OSART mission an opportunity to further enhance the safety of the operation of our NPP. A follow-up mission is expected to take place next autumn.

8. Hungary regularly provides in-field training opportunities for safeguards inspectors in the framework of the Hungarian Safeguards Support Programme to the IAEA. As part of this activity, a Complementary Access Exercise for IAEA safeguards inspectors was organized in April 2015 with the participation of several members of the Iran Task Force. Due to the success of the programme, Hungary was requested to organize an additional training course this autumn for inspectors to be deployed in Iran.

Mr President,

9. Management of radioactive waste is an area where comprehensive national strategies are essential that fulfil internationally endorsed criteria and standards. In this context, I am pleased to inform you that the Hungarian Parliament approved the *National Policy on Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management* in April 2015. The document lays down the fundamental principles, requirements and objectives of national spent fuel and radioactive waste management in accordance with the respective EU directive.

In addition, the Government elaborated a *National Programme on Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Management*. The document presents the technological implementation and scheduling of the National Policy.

In this process, Hungary is closely following the Agency's recommendations and safety principles. These developments contribute to creating a solid foundation for our national radioactive waste management framework that will be able to address future challenges successfully and in a flexible way.

Mr President,

10. The ability to innovate is fundamental to the future of nuclear technology and its application. Hungarian experts contributed to the development of improved fuel assemblies, allowing the NPP to transition from a current 12-month to a 15-month operating cycle. The longer cycle is in line with international trends, and enables better performance and more cost-efficient operation, while contributing to further reducing the radiation exposure of the employees.

11. Hungary attaches great importance to the Agency's activities under the Technical Cooperation Programme. It is my honour to greet the new Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation Mr Dazhu Yang Deputy-Director General. I am convinced that under his leadership the co-operation between the Secretariat and the Member States will be further enhanced resulting in successful projects in various field of nuclear techniques. Hungary contributes to the TC Programme by sharing experiences with embarking countries in the field of nuclear power. In 2014 my country hosted six workshops and training courses and looks forward to organize further TC events in 2015.

12. The IAEA also provides an excellent platform to enhance and extend co-operation between Member States on a bilateral basis. In this respect, I am pleased to inform you that this year Hungary signed Memoranda of Understanding with the Republic of Turkey as well as with the People's Republic of China on the peaceful use of nuclear energy. These agreements enable co-operation between educators, researchers and experts to provide and develop practical and theoretical training, transfer of knowledge about topics, inter alia nuclear power plant maintenance and operation, radioactive waste management and public acceptance of nuclear energy.

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates,

13. I firmly believe that - in a time of global energy and climate challenges - effective cooperation between nations in the field of nuclear energy is more important than ever. Let me conclude by expressing my country's appreciation of the IAEA's outstanding work in promoting the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy for the benefit of the people all around the world.

Thank you Mr President.