

**Statement by Rokas Baliukovas, Vice-minister of Energy
of the Republic of Lithuania, at the 59th Session of the
General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by congratulating Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Turkmenistan on their accession to the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement made by Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union. On my national behalf, I would like to add the following.

Nuclear Safety

Nuclear safety shall always be a number one priority when it comes to nuclear future and IAEA remains the key institution to set it's worldwide standards. The IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, endorsed at the 55th IAEA General Conference, produced concrete results, including information sharing, strengthening transparency and confidence building. We all took efforts to strengthen Convention of Nuclear Safety (CNS) and this year we finally have the result - unanimously adopted Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety, It is a good example of common solutions and shared responsibility. But there are still challenges waiting ahead, especially in ensuring effective implementation of international conventions and highest nuclear safety standards.

In this regard we, as IAEA member states, need to remain ambitious when it comes to safety at home and persistent when pursuing safety worldwide.

Each country has the right to develop nuclear energy, but international obligations on nuclear safety should be properly addressed and national decisions should be seen in a broader context of possible transboundary implications. It is our concern, when nuclear energy facilities are being constructed in close neighbourhood, next to objects of strategic importance including States Capitals, without proper implementation of

international conventions, nuclear safety standards and dialogue with all neighbours. All the countries developing nuclear energy have to follow the principles of transparency and responsibility for the whole nuclear cycle otherwise there would be no future for nuclear energy. These principles with particular attention must be respected by the newcomers of our nuclear community.

Nuclear Energy

Mr. President,

The electricity produced from nuclear power plants constitutes a reliable source of base-load, low carbon electricity, and plays an important role in energy security and contributes to meeting the decarbonisation targets. In this regard, we express our strong commitment to develop nuclear power in the most responsible way, maintaining nuclear safety at the centre of our political and technical attention.

Let me briefly update you on the nuclear-related activities performed in Lithuania since the last General Conference and to highlight the major achievements in this regard.

Due to the latest achievements related to integration of Lithuania into the EU energy market and grids, since November 2014 Lithuania has started projecting its future energy sector scenarios. As part of this process, development of the new nuclear power plant project in Lithuania (Visaginas NPP) is being assessed considering its impacts to security of energy supply and countries' macroeconomic indicators. It is planned to update the Lithuanian energy strategy by the end of this year giving the clarity for our future energy sector development.

Lithuania will continue to closely cooperate with the IAEA on the Visaginas NPP project implementation and we sincerely thank the IAEA for its comprehensive, competent and continuous support.

Decommissioning activities in Ignalina NPP, which ended its commercial operation in 2009, are performed according to projects and programs agreed upon with the Nuclear Regulatory Authority. All the necessary technical and management

measures to assure adequate level of safety of decommissioning activities are undertaken. Having spent nuclear fuel on Ignalina NPP site, Lithuania has actively participated in the stress tests that have been carried in European Union.

Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste

During 2014 – 2015 Lithuanian institutions reviewed the Lithuanian National Programme for the Management of Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste taking in to account requirements of the European Union directive on the radioactive waste and spent fuel management which has been adopted in 2011. Programme has been reviewed in order to assure safe and sustainable management of radioactive waste, with an emphasis on high level nuclear and radiation safety during the management of the spent fuel and radioactive waste from Ignalina NPP and defining long-term strategic guidelines in the preparation for the construction of geological repository and the disposal of the spent fuel and long-lived waste. In this process Lithuania closely followed the IAEA recommendations and safety principles.

Ionizing radiation

Implementation of IAEA safety guidance and standards on radiation protection in public, occupational and medical exposure in Lithuania is essential matter for ensuring reduction of doses for population. Lithuania, as many other countries in the world, is concerned about increasing medical exposure of population upon introducing new medical technologies. Therefore great attention is given to the justification and optimisation problems of medical exposure. Lithuania continues implementation of national TC project related to long term recording of patient doses and exposures which helps monitor medical exposure as well as ensure implementation of principles justification and optimization in medicine.

Regulatory Authorities

For the past few years Lithuanian institutions were actively preparing for the upcoming International Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission which will take

place in April of 2016. During the preparation phase all legislative acts were reviewed to evaluate their compliance with the IAEA standards.

Nuclear Security

In today's unpredictable world the most immediate and extreme threat to global security is the risk that terrorists could acquire nuclear materials. Nuclear terrorism is a real and present danger for all states, not just a few. Preventing it – is an achievable goal. The current focus on nuclear security through voluntary actions, however, is not commensurate with either the risk or consequences of nuclear terrorism.

In order to secure nuclear materials and counter illicit nuclear trafficking and nuclear terrorism, national and international nuclear security measures must be in place. We call on countries which have not done so to adhere to and fully implement relevant international instruments, especially the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Recent ratifications bring significant steps towards the entry into force of this important legal instrument.

Three Nuclear Security Summits – have given an important impetus for far-reaching initiatives that collectively strengthen nuclear security around the globe, reduce the threat of nuclear terrorism and secure vulnerable nuclear and radiological materials. Lithuania is committed to the process of preparation for Nuclear Security Summit and actively contributes to it. The NSS high-level (Sherpa) meeting in preparation for the next summit was held in Vilnius in June, 2015.

Lithuania continues to improve its legal framework related to the security of nuclear facilities and nuclear materials. Amendments to the Law on Nuclear Energy were drafted to better regulate the physical security of a construction site of a nuclear facility and trustworthiness check of the people gaining access to the nuclear facility.

Iran

Mr. President,

Lithuania welcomes the agreement reached by P5 + 1 and Iran on a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, unanimously endorsed by the United Nation Security

Council. We applaud the perseverance and determination of all those involved in this extraordinary diplomatic endeavour. Lithuania is convinced that, if implemented fully and in good faith, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action will become a crucial element in building trust between Iran and the international community, open the door to a steady improvement of relations with Iran and positively contribute to regional and international peace and stability.

Nuclear Non-Proliferation

The international non-proliferation regime, based on the IAEA verification and safeguards system, has prevented the spread of nuclear weapons. Still, proliferation as well as the risk of non-state actors getting access to nuclear materials or radioactive sources, represents a serious threat to international security.

Technical Cooperation

Lithuania highly values the technical cooperation programme of the IAEA, and its role in building, strengthening and maintaining capacities in safe, peaceful and secure use of nuclear technologies. Lithuania in cooperation with the IAEA is performing 3 national projects dedicated to radioactive waste management, institutional capacity building and radiation protection. We are grateful to the IAEA for provided possibility to Lithuanian institutions to strengthen the competence in various areas of nuclear safety and security, radiation protection and manegment of radioactive waste.

Mr. President,

Lithuania believes that climate friendly nuclear energy can be safe only if it is developed in a responsible way. And it is clear that nuclear technologies need intensive international collaboration and oversight. Lithuania strongly supports global efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security. In this context Lithuania lends its full support to the IAEA programmes.

I thank you, Mr. President