

**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Cristian ISTRATE,
Ambassador of ROMANIA
at the 59th Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy
Agency (IAEA)
(Vienna, 14 - 18 September 2015)**

**Mr. President,
Mr. Director General,
Distinguished Delegates,**

Let me first congratulate you, Mr. President, on assuming this important office and assure you of my delegation's full support during the 59th session of IAEA GC.

In 2015, Romania celebrates 60 years since the beginning of its national civil nuclear program. This anniversary serves as an opportunity to confirm Romania's commitment to the peaceful use of nuclear energy and the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, as well as its unabated support for the role and purposes of the IAEA.

Mr. President,

In addition to the statement made earlier by the representative of the European Union, I would like to reaffirm, in national capacity my country's commitment to nuclear non-proliferation. As a State Party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), Romania is convinced that the NPT remains at the core of the current disarmament and nonproliferation regime and is an essential instrument of global security. The Treaty is far more important to international community as a whole than any sectorial approach or political gambling and preserving its integrity and validity as well as further strengthen the NPT is a collective responsibility share by all States Parties.

In the review cycle 2010-2015, Romania played an active role, having the privilege to chair the Second Preparatory Committee and the Main Committee II on issues of nonproliferation during the 2015 Review Conference.

In spite of lack of consensus at the last NPT RevCon the Action Plan adopted in 2010 is standing as a roadmap for further progress and the reference document against which the implementation of the Treaty should continue to be assessed. The elements virtually agreed at the Conference, in particular those on non-proliferation and peaceful uses, should represent a source of inspiration as we proceed to negotiate relevant resolutions in the coming days.

Romania fully support the efforts of the AIEA to further develop the State Level concept in the application of safeguards, that will allow the AIEA to improve its efficiency while maintaining and strengthening the effectiveness of its Safeguards implementation respecting the existing legal framework of the Safeguards Agreements and the Additional Protocols.

In our view, certain developments and events of concern over the past few years have underscored the critical role of the Additional Protocol, that, together with Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, establish a real verification standard for NPT and strengthen the IAEA's capabilities to detect and respond to non-compliance with the safeguards obligations. For this reason, Romania

strongly supports the universal adoption and implementation of the Additional Protocol. We have to continue our efforts to expand the adherence to the Additional Protocol.

The use of nuclear materials and technologies must remain only for peaceful purposes, based on the IAEA integrated safeguards system, and fully respecting the IAEA highest standards of safety, security and non-proliferation. For all of these reasons, IAEA preserves a crucial role in ensuring a safe, secure and proliferation-free use of atoms for peace. We have the shared responsibility to give the IAEA the political, financial and technical support needed in order for the Agency to continue to fulfil its mandate under Article III of the NPT given the increasing interest in nuclear energy as well as preparing for future challenges.

Indeed, there is a real need for new steps to counter global threats and challenges coming from the states (or non-state actors) which defy international law and global standards in the field. Concrete results should be achieved with those states currently not in compliance with their respective obligations and commitments.

We welcome the final and comprehensive agreement reached on 14 July 2015, in Vienna, between E3+3 and Iran, on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as well as the IAEA – Iran “Roadmap for the clarification of past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran’s nuclear program”. The full implementation of all the provisions of these agreements by Iran will represent the beginning of a gradual and long-term process whose final goal is to ensure that the Iranian nuclear program was, is and will be used exclusively for peaceful purposes. In this regard, the IAEA’s role remains paramount.

We urge the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to follow suit, and to comply fully, unconditionally and without delay with all its international obligations and to resume the negotiating process within the format of Six Party Talks.

Mr. President,

Returning to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, let me point out that Romania’s expertise is important, in that it encompasses the entire nuclear cycle, from uranium extraction and fuel manufacture, all the way to safe storage of radioactive waste. Romania believes that nuclear energy has an essential contribution to make in meeting crucial human needs as well as to sustainable development, in the fields of health, industry, agriculture, access to water and energy, and environmental protection.

One of the 32 countries in the world which have available the technology of the nuclear fuel cycle, Romania remains nevertheless committed to safe and secure use of nuclear power as part of its overall energy mix. The consistency of procedures and practices in the field of nuclear safety and security, in use at all nuclear facilities in Romania, has been repeatedly confirmed by the International Atomic Energy Agency, as well as the European Union competent authorities.

In this context, Romania has established itself as a responsible actor, which use nuclear energy exclusively for peaceful purposes and we have already a tradition of proactive commitments in international cooperation projects, constantly expressing willingness to share our experience of 60 years of activity in the nuclear field. And I will give the most recent example - the Institute for Nuclear Research in Romania and the IAEA just signed a Practical Arrangement that set the framework for a cooperation regarding Scientific and Technical Support provided to IAEA Member States in the area of Nuclear Safety.

I will now briefly turn to the issue of nuclear security: as a country actively dedicated to the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process, Romania attaches great importance to all security measures which can ensure that nuclear material remains exclusively for peaceful uses. As part of its contribution to

the NSS, Romania has undertaken several unilateral and multilateral commitments, whose implementation results will be reported on during the 2016 Summit. We are prepared to work with all participating states to the NSS process in order to maximize the outcomes of the 2016 Summit, and to identify the wisest follow-up to this process beyond 2016.

In preparation of the 2016 Summit in the United States, I can assure you of Romania's dynamic and committed involvement in drafting the Action Plans, including the one concerning the IAEA.

Furthermore, Romania is proud of its support to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund, to which it contributed 30.000 Euros in 2014, and pledged to contribute further 30.000 Euros in 2016.

Romania is also a strong supporter of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation (TC) Program and of the statutory right of any Member States to be eligible for TC programs. TC is the way in which the Agency promotes the applications of nuclear related techniques in order to eradicate poverty and hunger worldwide, hence contributing to the Millennium Development Goals. Furthermore, TC also helps Member States with peaceful nuclear power programs implementing the IAEA standards of safety and security.

Romania benefitted greatly from the TC in a number of programs on nuclear security and safety, while also offering an in-kind contribution. However, after the current cycle (2014-2015), I am pleased to inform you that Romania will consider a gradual reduction of its national programs on TC funds, in view of transitioning from the status of beneficiary state to that of contributor.

The IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) is a valuable and flexible mechanism to mobilize voluntary extra-budgetary resources to help address development needs of NPT States Parties. That is why Romania would like to take this opportunity to reiterate its support for PUI, and to commend its role in ensuring food security, advancing human health and protecting the environment.

Romania acknowledges with satisfaction that, thanks to the ratification of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC) by Japan, the CSC entered into force on 15 April 2015, being an important international instrument relating to liability and compensation for damage caused by a nuclear accident. Romania, having ratified the CSC in 1999, fully endorses the Convention's main objectives: to establish a global nuclear liability regime in which all States may participate and to increase the amount of compensation available in the event of a nuclear incident by establishing a minimum national compensation amount and an international fund, to which Contracting Parties will be expected to contribute in the event of a nuclear accident.

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates,

I would like to bring to your attention a few more developments, which substantiate Romania's support for IAEA's role and contribution.

As a national contact point for the physical protection of nuclear materials and for preventing and combating the illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive material, the National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control contributes to the IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database, having the responsibility to report if such events occur on the Romanian territory.

Based on a bilateral document signed last year, between the National Commission for Nuclear Activities Control and the IAEA / Office of Nuclear Security, CNCAN will benefit of specialized support in areas like security culture, prevention and protection against threats, security of transport of radioactive materials, security of radioactive sources, combating illicit trafficking of nuclear materials. Some activities have been carried-out during the year and others are being planned.

In the same vein, Romania gives the highest attention to spent fuel and radioactive waste management in order to meet the specific obligation for the implementation of the Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom (the "Waste Directive"). The first report on the Romanian National Programme for spent fuel and radioactive waste management has been prepared to notify the European Commission on the content of the National Programme under Article 15(4) of Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom on the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste.

And, as a member of the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation (IFNEC) next October Romania will host an international workshop on the management of radioactive waste, followed by the Executive Committee and the Steering Committee of IFNEC.

Finally, Mr. President,

Romania would like to assure Director General Amano and the Secretariat of our full support and cooperation in the framework of the Agency's continuous effort to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Thank you.