

Statement of the Head of Delegation of the Slovak Republic

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Chairperson of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic

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Mr. President, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Slovak Delegation, let me join other delegations in congratulating you, Mr. President, on your election as the President of the Fifty Ninth IAEA General Conference. You may rest assured of the full support of my delegation in discharging your responsible duties. I would also like to welcome Antigua and Barbuda, Turkmenistan and Barbados that have recently decided to join the organization.

My delegation subscribes to the statement delivered by the distinguished representative of Luxembourg on behalf of the European Union. In addition, I would like to address some issues in my national capacity that are of particular importance to my country.

Nuclear power

Mr. President,

Nuclear power remains an important option for many countries to secure their energy needs at affordable and stable generating costs taking into account environmental protection. The increase of global nuclear generation capacity continues to grow steadily, particularly in countries with developing economies with increasing energy needs.

Slovakia continues to develop its nuclear power programme as a clean source of energy. In November 2014 my Government adopted a new strategy on Energy Policy of the Slovak Republic. Nuclear energy has the stable position in the Slovak energy mix. Currently the construction of 2 units at the Mochovce site continues and, in addition, a new nuclear source is planned at the Jaslovské Bohunice site. The latter one is momentary in the process of environmental impact assessment. These additional units should provide sufficient energy generating capacity for Slovakia in the years to come.

Nuclear safety and security

Mr. President,

Nuclear safety is one of the key preconditions for the use of nuclear energy. Slovakia supports the Agency's efforts aimed at globalizing nuclear safety by networking, integrating safety-related activities, assisting the Member States in the application of Safety Standards, and promoting adherence to the relevant international conventions.

In general, Slovakia recognizes and strongly supports the Agency's Peer Review mechanisms, which are seen as an essential tool that combines elements

of external assessment and self-assessment, leading to the strengthened and consolidated international nuclear safety culture. Nuclear safety cooperation between regulators and a worldwide system of mutual peer reviews have proven to be an important pillar in the international nuclear safety regime and in building mutual confidence.

Slovakia hosted an Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission in 2012 and consequently an IRRS follow-up mission early this year. The Team reviewed progress in addressing the findings from an IRRS mission conducted in 2012. The follow-up mission concluded that the recommendations and suggestions from the 2012 IRRS mission have been taken into account systematically by a comprehensive Action Plan. Significant progress has been made in many areas and improvements have been implemented in accordance with the Action Plan. This is a significant accomplishment, which demonstrates a commitment of my government to an effective implementation of the IRRS findings.

Slovakia also hosted several OSART Peer Review missions at its NPPs in the past. These safety peer reviews, along with the Agency's advisory services and other types of peer review mechanisms, such as the WANO Peer Reviews, are highly valued by both, the regulator and the operators, as they provide meaning inputs for a continuous improvement of national nuclear safety framework.

My delegation welcomes the progress which has been made over the past years in connection with the Fukushima Daiichi accident. The Report on the Fukushima Daiichi Accident provides insights towards a comprehensive understanding of the root causes, analyzes technical aspects and furthermore incorporates and reflects on lessons learned. We welcome the publication of the 5 detailed technical volumes during this General Conference.

Another important event that took place under the Agency's auspices was the Diplomatic Conference on Nuclear Safety which considered a proposal to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety. In this regard, my delegation has welcomed the adoption of the Vienna Declaration through which the Contracting Parties have adopted principles to guide them, as appropriate, in the implementation of the objective of the CNS to prevent accidents with radiological consequences and mitigate such consequences should they occur. The implementation of the Vienna Declaration requires serious attention by all Contracting Parties in order to ensure a high level of nuclear safety.

As regards nuclear security, my delegation commends the Agency for its activities related to the facilitation of adherence to and implementation of key international instruments for nuclear security. The entry into force of the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) deems particular importance in strengthening global nuclear security framework.

Slovakia also recognises the significant role of the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee (NSGC) and acknowledges the successful completion of its first three-year term. The relevant IAEA security guidance documents developed by the NSGC are useful for Member States to establish and improve their national legal frameworks and to introduce best practices.

Nuclear technology

Mr. President,

Slovakia is convinced that peaceful uses of atomic energy have a decisive role to play in fulfilling fundamental human needs and contributing to the

achievement of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals which are expected to be approved in coming weeks. Therefore, it is instrumental to contribute to these goals by carrying out and putting in place advance programs related to nuclear science, technology and applications. The leadership role of the Agency and its continuous efforts in this area are essential.

I would also like to reiterate the importance of the Agency's nuclear non-power programmes. In this regard, Slovakia emphasizes its support to the activities carried out through the partnerships with other organizations, such as the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). Over the past 50 years the Joint IAEA/FAO Division contributed significantly to the health, food, agriculture and economic development all over the world.

As to the African Union's Pan African Tsetse and Trypanosomiasis Eradication Campaign (AU-PATTEC), we commend the Agency for its continuous support to the project and recognize its efforts in this matter. With the aim to strengthen national and regional capacities, Slovakia provides assistance to affected countries through Sterile Insect Techniques method. The Institute of Zoology at the Slovak Academy of Sciences renders support and cooperates with the respective institutions in African region.

As regards human health, nuclear techniques are critical for the early detection, diagnosis, treatment and care of cancer. Often, they are the sole means of diagnosis and treatment, and are one of the most effective and efficient methods for treating cancer. Therefore, such programme provides a tool for Member States in improving their cancer control and treatment capacities. Hence, Slovakia wishes to reiterate its support to the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT).

Technical cooperation

Mr. President,

My delegation fully supports the Technical Cooperation Programme and the role that Agency plays in further development of the peaceful applications of nuclear technology. Slovakia appreciates the implementation of measures aimed at greater efficiency and effectiveness in technical cooperation management and project implementation, as well as the application of the principles of transparency and accountability. I would like to emphasize the importance and the benefits of technical cooperation among the Member States. For instance, Member States which have reached a high level competence in a given field, may share their experience and knowledge with other Member States. Such networking, for example in the Europe region, is based on the principles of responsiveness, collaboration and solidarity, impact, inclusiveness, partnership, transparency, safety, security and non-proliferation. This approach contributes to the self-sufficiency and sustainability of the outcomes, which takes into account the specificities of the region or the sub-regions.

Given the great importance to the sufficient funding of the TC programme, it is my delegation's view that the resources of the Technical Cooperation Fund should be sufficient, assured and predictable. Recently adopted Strategic Guidelines on Partnerships and Resource Mobilization appears to be a viable instrument to raise additional resources in combining diverse private-public partners/donors, international organizations, initiatives and other relevant actors. Nevertheless, we encourage other Member States to pay on time and in full their share of TCF target.

Finally, Mr. President, let me assure you of Slovakia's continuous and full support to the Agency.

I thank you Mr. President.