



IAEA 59th GENERAL CONFERENCE,

14 September – 18 September 2015

Statement by Slovenia

as delivered by

H.E. Mr. Andrej Benedejčič

Ambassador -Permanent Representative

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Slovenian Government let me first **congratulate** you on your election as the President of the 59th session of the IAEA General Conference. I assure you and the Secretariat of full support of my delegation in achieving successful conclusions at all agenda items.

We also congratulate to new members of the Agency.

Slovenia fully aligns with the EU statement presented by the distinguished representative of Luxembourg therefore I am going to stress only the matters of particular interest for Slovenia.

Mr. President,

There were several important developments that happened after last year's session of the General Conference.

First, we would like to welcome the 14 July 2015 agreement reached in Vienna between Iran and China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, with the facilitation of the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign and Security Policy, on a Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). In the context of the long-running diplomatic efforts to reach a comprehensive, long lasting and peaceful solution to the Iranian nuclear issue, this is a historic moment. We expect that

implementation of this agreement will closely follow the agreed schedule to build confidence among the parties, which is essential for security and stability of the region.

Secondly, I would like to refer to last Review Conference of the States Parties to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT) that took place last May in New York. We regret unsuccessful conclusion of the Review Conference which did not manage to adopt its final outcome document. Nevertheless, we continue to appeal to all states to continue with non-proliferation efforts and cooperate fully with the Agency. We also appeal to states with nuclear weapons to continue reductions of their nuclear stocks. Finally, we would call upon all states concerned to continue their efforts to organize and attend a Conference that would start negotiations on a Treaty establishing Middle East as a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. President,

Let me continue with **technical cooperation**, the Agency's activity comprising the broadest scope of nuclear and radiation applications, which contributes to sustainable national and international development. Slovenia notes with satisfaction that the technical co-operation programme is continuously strengthening and it enjoys appropriate attention and importance among other Agency's areas of activity. We would like to emphasize that strict implementation of safety, security and safeguards measures in the technical cooperation programme is mandatory to prevent unnecessary risks to the health of citizens, workers, patients or the environment and to ensure the nuclear material is not diverted for illegal purposes. Slovenia continues good cooperation with the Agency by providing training opportunities for many IAEA fellows and scientific visitors from third countries in our organisations and research establishments. Slovenia is also thankful to the IAEA for opportunities to send our experts to participate in training or cooperation activities organised in the scope of the Technical Assistance.

We are proud to report, that our experts are frequently invited to join IAEA peer review missions of different kind to third countries. In addition the Slovenian Nuclear Safety Administration is also actively engaged in assistance to the regulatory bodies in non-EU countries through the European Commission projects.

Mr. President,

My delegation has always recognized the **IAEA safeguards system** as a fundamental component of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. We are convinced that the IAEA runs an effective and efficient safeguards system in performing control over nuclear materials. I would like to express our great appreciation for the way in which the Secretariat is implementing its mandate in this important Agency activity. In our opinion, introduction of the State Level Concept leads to a more efficient and effective application of safeguards in all IAEA member states. We are ready to further support development and implementation of the **State Level Concept** as a dynamic process.

Slovenia attaches great importance to **nuclear security** and commends Agency's central role in strengthening the international nuclear security framework. In Slovenia, we are following the objective and essential elements as determined in the Agency's document on Nuclear Security Fundamentals from 2013. We are doing utmost to ensure security of our nuclear facilities, radioactive sources and associated activities. As regards our cooperation with the Agency, we regularly report to the Incident and Trafficking Database and actively take part in the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee, amongst others. We look forward to the next IAEA international nuclear security conference, which is due in Vienna in December 2016. Slovenia also sees Agency's work in this field as a complementary effort to the political process of Nuclear Security Summits that was started by the United States five years ago.

Mr. President,

The **nuclear power** remains an indispensable part of the Slovenian energy mix. We can report that the Krško NPP operates without any events significantly affecting nuclear safety.

The fact that there was no outage in the Krško NPP in 2014, as well as stable operation and sufficient availability of cooling water from the Sava river contributed to the production of more than 6 TWh of electricity in one calendar year, which is by far the plant's best result in its history. The plant implemented substantial improvements for eliminating recent problems with damaged fuel. The most important was the coolant up-flow conversion around the

reactor core. The owners of the Krško NPP commissioned feasibility study for economic justification of long term NPP operation. The study confirmed expectations for continuation of operation of the existing nuclear capacity as the most competitive option compared to the prices of other energy sources. This study confirmed that there are no objections against further investments into the Krško NPP safety upgrade programme. Based on that study the Interstate Commission on Ownership Issues representing both owners of the Krško NPP, Republic of Slovenia and of Croatia, approved the extension of the operating life for another 20 years until 2043 and the construction of the dry spent fuel storage at the site of the NPP.

At the peer review workshop organized by ENSREG and held in Brussels in April 2015 the Slovenian Post-Fukushima National Action Plan was praised for good preparedness for severe accidents and fast incorporation of the updated WENRA Safety Reference Levels into the Slovenian draft legislation, which should be adopted by the end of this year.

The **TRIGA research reactor** at the Jožef Stefan Institute operates safely and it even increased the scope of its research programme. The research reactor was also a subject of a ten year periodic safety review, which was concluded this year. The review has shown that the reactor operates within the safety limits and there are no obstacles for continuation of operation for the next ten year period.

Mr. President,

Turning to **emergency preparedness and response**, the Slovenian experts actively contribute to the IAEA activities taking part in consultancies, exercises, the EPREV missions, as well as in the development of the relevant documents, conducting workshops, courses, etc. This year national stakeholders finished work on reassessing emergency planning basis for the Krško NPP. This was performed in a close cooperation with representatives of the regulatory body from neighbouring Republic of Croatia. The conclusions were that although the Krško NPP implemented many actions to reduce probability of a large radioactive release, which includes installation of filtered vent system, the distances of planning zones should remain as they

were, but the protective actions within the zones should be aligned with the latest international guidelines. The last NPP Krško annual exercise, conducted in November 2014, was a national full scope exercise with all key organizations involved as well as organizations from neighbouring Croatia and Italy. In addition, the IAEA participated to test and train its new capabilities for assessment and prognosis.

Mr. President,

At the Review Meeting of the parties of the Joint Convention in May this year it was recognized that Slovenia has a well regulated system of **radioactive waste and spent fuel management**. However, there are some challenges for the future. After many years of standstill the activities for construction of low and intermediate level radioactive waste repository have started moving forward. The site investigation is in its final stage and the design engineering company has been chosen and has started working. The revision of the Krško NPP decommissioning programme and the new national programme for radioactive waste and spent fuel management for period 2015-2016 remain the ongoing tasks, which are to be finished by the end of this year.

In the conclusion, Mr. President,

I would like to focus on the IRRS Follow-Up Mission which we hosted last year. The mission reviewed the implementation of the action plan developed after the 2011 IRRS Mission. At the end of the IRRS Follow-Up Mission only one recommendation and one suggestion remained open. In general, the mission was pleased with the implementation of the actions. The open recommendation was referring to the slow progress of construction of a repository for low and intermediate level radioactive waste, which I have already mentioned in this statement. However, two new recommendations were issued. One was addressing adequacy of financial resources and the number of competent staff working for the SNSA, and the other recommending strengthening regulatory research and development.

We also decided to invite the EPREV mission to review national nuclear and radiation emergency preparedness and response, as well as the OSART to the Krško NPP, which are both scheduled for 2017.

Mr. President,

In the international context the IAEA plays a leading role in the area of nuclear safety and is widely recognized as highly impartial and professional organization. We share this position and Slovenia is ready to support and contribute to the Agency's wide scope of work.

I would like to conclude my remarks by sincerely thanking to the Director General and the Secretariat for their diligent work to fulfil the Agency's statutory obligations. Their professionalism and dedication are instrumental in helping the Agency to achieve its mandate.

Thank you, Mr. President.