

Statement of the Czech Republic

Delivered by Ms. Dana Drábová

President of the State Office for Nuclear Safety

To the 2018 IAEA General Conference

Of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Vienna, 18 September 2018

Thank you, Madam President.

First of all, let me congratulate you on your election as President of this General Conference. I assure you of the full support and cooperation of my delegation.

Madam President, your Excellencies, distinguished guests, the Czech Republic aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union by Austria. In addition, I would like to make the following remarks in my national capacity.

Madam President,

Let me focus primarily on nuclear safety area.

We follow closely how the Agency continues to build upon the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and the experience of its implementation by Member States, the IAEA Report on the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant accident, and the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety, and how they are used for defining nuclear safety strategy and programme of work.

It remains important that the Agency promotes safety culture and supports Member States in developing and improving their safety culture programmes, promoting and sustaining oversight of licensees' as well as regulatory bodies' own safety culture. In this regard I would like to commend the Technical Secretariat for having organised several consultancy and technical meetings and workshops to this end. In addition to that, the revision of the Safety Guides supporting the Safety Requirements publication Leadership and Management for Safety (IAEA Safety Standards Series No. GSR Part 2) continues.

In order to enhance institutional strength in depth, at the request of the Commission on Safety Standards (CSS), which I have had the privilege to chair,

a number of actions were taken in response to the International Nuclear Safety Group (INSAG) publication (INSAG Series No.27), including an assessment of the implications of the INSAG-27 report for the Agency's safety standards and peer review and advisory services.

Madam President,

We continue to strongly support the Convention on Nuclear Safety and we are planning for our active participation in its 2020 Review Meeting.

On a related note, let me briefly turn to the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention, another key instrument in the global nuclear safety framework. In the course of its Sixth Review Meeting, held in Vienna in May–June 2018, the Contracting Parties reviewed national reports in Country Group sessions and identified that good progress was being made in many areas of spent fuel and radioactive waste safety and adopted proposals to improve the effectiveness of the review process. I am pleased to recall that two Areas of Good Performance in the Czech Republic were identified, namely coming into force of the New Atomic Act and related decrees, incorporating applicable international norms, and the approval of Updated National Policy for RW Management and SF Management, reflecting Euratom requirements and recommendations of IAEA and OECD/NEA.

Madam President,

The Czech Republic has long been an advocate for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, based, among others, on intense bilateral and multilateral cooperation. We are aware of the importance of the work the IAEA does with regards to non-proliferation, nuclear energy, nuclear safety, nuclear security and, last but not least, technical cooperation programme. The Czech Republic would like to reaffirm our full support to the Agency. We contribute, in full and on time,

to the Regular Budget and Technical Cooperation Fund and we provide extrabudgetary contributions through the Peaceful Uses Initiative, continuing our assistance to Armenia in upgrading its national nuclear regulatory infrastructure. Our experts participate frequently in peer review missions to other Member States.

Madam President,

Nuclear power production in our region, especially with regard to new build, is sometimes the subject of criticism due to questionable return on investment, which results in uncertainty as to what the financing model should be. However, I am convinced that we cannot simply calculate the return on investment when it comes to States' obligation to ensure strategic commodities, such as electricity, for their citizens. Those nuclear blocks that are supposed to be closed within next decades should be replaced by new build, however primarily due to the mentioned economic challenges, we are already slightly behind the original schedule, waiting for the necessary political decisions. Of course, the state-of-the-art in nuclear safety must be reflected in measures taken, ensuring the public trust and confidence. That, in turn, creates substantial costs borne by investors. Nevertheless, it has been our longstanding view that ensuring nuclear safety, supported by the widespread adoption of robust nuclear safety and security standards, alongside effective non-proliferation measures, is paramount to the successful development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy worldwide.

Madam President, that concludes my remarks and I wish you and the Conference every success.