



## G R E E C E

**Statement by Mr. Nikolaos Sapountzis  
Chargé d' Affaires a.i. and Acting Resident Representative of Greece to the  
IAEA  
on the occasion of the 62nd General Conference of the IAEA  
Vienna, 17-21 September 2018**

Madam President,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of the 62nd General Conference of the IAEA and to assure you of my delegation's full support.

My Government cordially congratulates Director General Amano and the Secretariat for their excellent work performed during such a challenging period. We would like to assure the DG of our continuing support and to wish him a speedy recovery.

Greece aligns itself fully with the Statement made by Austria on behalf of the EU. I wish, nevertheless, to make some additional remarks, on issues which my government considers being of particular importance:

Greece will continue to fully support the IAEA's role in promoting the **non-proliferation** regime and the effective application of **Safeguards**, as well as its programmes on **Nuclear Safety and Security, Technical Cooperation and Nuclear Applications**.

Madam President,

**Non-proliferation and Safeguards:**

Greece strongly supports the **universality** of the **NPT** as the cornerstone of the global non – proliferation and disarmament architecture, and urges all States that have not yet done so to join the Treaty as non – nuclear weapon states. For my country, NPT's current review cycle is more than ever important in many aspects.

We regret that no progress has been made in the last year to convene the Conference on a **Middle East Zone free of Nuclear Weapons**. We encourage all

parties to reinvigorate their efforts in this direction, on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at by the States of the region.

We further believe that a prerequisite for strengthening Safeguards effectiveness is the entry into force of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (**CTBT**), thus Greece calls upon all states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify **CTBT**.

Greece did welcome the **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA)**, as a historic agreement, a successful multilateral endeavour that was unanimously endorsed by a UN Security Council Resolution. It serves the E.U. security interests, enhances the global architecture of non – proliferation and disarmament, addresses regional security concerns and highlights the key role of the IAEA in verifying Iran's nuclear related commitments. While regretting that one of the agreement's partners, the USA, withdrew from it, Greece supports the ongoing implementation of the JCPOA and commends the IAEA for its professional and impartial work in verifying Iran's nuclear commitments.

Greece supports the current diplomatic efforts for a political agreement at the **Korean peninsula**. We call on DPRK to comply with its obligations under relevant UN Security Council Resolutions, to maintain its declared suspension of testing nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles and to cooperate with the IAEA. In this regard, we acknowledge the Agency's readiness to fulfil, if so requested, its role in verifying the complete and irreversible return of DPRK in a comprehensive Safeguards agreement, in a timely manner.

Greece supports the Agency's efforts to further develop and successfully implement the **State Level Safeguards Approaches** in States under integrated Safeguards and welcomes DG's periodic reporting on this matter.

Madam President,

### **Safety and Security:**

Greece has neither nuclear power in its national energy mix nor plans to embark on a nuclear power programme. Nonetheless, we acknowledge the continued increase in the use of nuclear energy and the expansion of related sensitive technologies and materials.

Greece fully supports IAEA's vital role in strengthening States' capacity to ensure that the development and use of nuclear energy take place under the most rigorous **Safety** and **Security** conditions for the protection of people and the environment.

Greece believes that the development of nuclear energy infrastructure in volatile regions – such as the Middle East and Eastern Mediterranean – requires vigilance. In addition, it requires full cooperation with the IAEA and ample and transparent international collaboration, so as to minimize safety, security and proliferation risks.

Thus, we assign high importance to stringent implementation of IAEA's safety standards and nuclear security guidance documents. Multinational confidence-building can be reached through IAEA's international assistance and peer review missions, inter alia such as Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Reviews (INIR) and Site Evaluation for External Risks (SEED) and, through **transparency** around their results and **compliance** with their recommendations.

We applaud the IAEA for stressing in its 2018-2021 Nuclear Security Programme the important elements of transparency and predictability, as well as for introducing the concept of “Nuclear Security by Design”, similarly to Nuclear Safety.

Madam President,

Allow me to highlight the **main national activities** occurred since the last GC.

Greece, through the Greek Atomic Energy Commission (EEAE), continued to cooperate with the IAEA in several areas:

- In November 2017, the IAEA carried out an IRRS follow-up mission in Greece. According to its findings, Greece has been responsive to the recommendations and suggestions made in 2012.
- The new Greek legislative and regulatory framework related to establishing new radiation protection regulations according to the EU-Directive 59/2013/ BSS - Basic Safety Standards is almost completed.
- In the area of nuclear Safety, there was continued upgrading and regulatory control of temporary storage facilities of radioactive sources and radioactive waste.
- Greece participated in the 6<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting on the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, held in Vienna in May 2018. Greece's relevant national programme was assessed positively, satisfying the Convention's requirements.

- Through its Regulatory Authority, Greece, a maritime nation, chairs the Mediterranean Network for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Materials (MedNet).
- In the area of nuclear security, an installation of four new Portal Radiation Detection Systems was carried out at one custom station of the country .
- We are looking forward to the International Conference on the Security of Radioactive Material, organised by the Agency this December.
- Greece is honoured by the Director General's decision to have a high level Greek expert to serve, for a second three year term, as member of AdSec, the DG's advisory group on Nuclear Security.

Madam President,

### **Technical Cooperation, Science and Technology:**

Greece participated in 15 IAEA's regional programmes of Technical Cooperation by making available experts and assessing their progress.

In April 2018, the "Europe Regional National Liaison Officers Meeting" took place in Athens

Six scientists from five IAEA Member- States were trained in Greece through fellowships, scientific visits and on-the-job-training

About 40 Greek nationals participated in Science and Technology related activities under the IAEA Technical Cooperation programme.

The sixth cycle of the postgraduate educational course in radiation protection and the safety of radiation sources begins on October 8, 2018 in Athens. The sixth cycle of the course, lasting 22 weeks, is attended by 19 officials from regulatory authorities, coming from 16 countries of the IAEA Europe Region, as well as from several Central Asian countries.

Finally Madame President, in the field of sterilization techniques, an area where Greece has performed internationally a pioneer work in cooperation with the Agency, we are happy to announce that Greece, in cooperation with the IAEA, began implementing the nuclear based sterile insect technique (SIT) in a region near Athens. The comments received so far are very positive and the strong public and media engagement and awareness is considered as a very important component for the success of this project.

Concluding Madam President,

The Greek Government would like to reiterate its strong support to the important mission and relevant projects of the IAEA and to express Greece's commitment to continue its active cooperation with the Agency.

Thank you,