

Statement by the Republic of Moldova at the 62nd IAEA General Conference

Vienna, September 17-21, 2018

Presented by Mr. Ion Apostol,
Director of the National Agency
for Regulation of Nuclear and Radiological Activities

Madam President,

I would like to congratulate you on your election as the President for this 62nd General Conference of the IAEA, and I have the honour to pledge Moldova's full support in achieving the goals of the General Conference.

The Republic of Moldova, as a non-nuclear-weapon State Party to the NPT, is convinced that the Treaty remains the cornerstone of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, which also provides a perspective of a world without nuclear weapons. In this regard, we believe that safeguards implementation by all Member States will allow for the IAEA to improve its appliance of safeguards. This in turn is a prerequisite for stopping the spread of nuclear weapons and – in the longer perspective a precondition for nuclear disarmament. In line with this, we support the application of IAEA Safeguards in the Middle East as a strategic instrument to strengthen peace and stability worldwide.

Madam President,

My country is proud to join Director-General Amano's call within the IAEA Board of Governors to request that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea complies fully with its obligations under the Security Council resolutions and to cooperate promptly with the IAEA on the implementation of the NPT and IAEA safeguards.

The Republic of Moldova recognises the growing threat of terrorism, which is also targeting nuclear materials and installations. In this regard we welcome the IAEA's Nuclear Security Plan for 2018 – 2021 as a step in the right direction, providing thus a road-map for member states in upgrading their nuclear security standards.

In addition to strengthening its national capabilities, my country puts many efforts into regional cooperation against nuclear terrorism. Next year, Moldova plans to host the IAEA's Regional Training on Nuclear Security Response Capability Programme. The scope of this event is to assist countries from the region to develop a comprehensive response plan for nuclear security events.

In order to increase its capacity to prevent and combat illicit trafficking of nuclear material, the Republic of Moldova is establishing a national nuclear forensics laboratory as a part of a regional network of nuclear forensics capabilities. It will perform analysis and characterization of seized nuclear and radioactive material. In this regard is to be mentioned that a pilot training course on the Application of Existing Capabilities to a Nuclear Forensics Investigation will be conducted in early October this year in Moldova with the valuable support of NSDD Office of US National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA).

During the past years, with the assistance of the OSCE, the US Department of Energy and the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority, we have regained regulatory control over significant numbers of radioactive sources from abandoned facilities - most of them being located in the Transnistrian region of our country. For the coming years, the Republic of Moldova has ambitious plans for further actions to recover orphan sources in close cooperation with the IAEA.

Madam President,

The TC Country Program Framework (CPF) for the Republic of Moldova is soon going to be approved for a period of several years. The Programme identifies the priority areas and national development goals. In close cooperation with the IAEA TC Department, the Republic of Moldova has made significant steps in strengthening national health institutions' capacities to implement new technologies in nuclear medicine, radio-diagnostic and radiotherapy, in reducing the impact from radon on human health as well as in radioactive waste management.

In December this year IAEA will conduct an IRRS mission at my country's request. The Mission's recommendations will serve as a road map for further development of our regulatory framework.

Moldova appreciates IAEA continuous efforts in supporting member states to implement projects aimed to strengthening safety and security of radioactive wastes. The national Radioactive Waste Disposal Facility needs to be decommissioned and refurbished for the safe management of radioactive wastes. These activities are set in the Action plan for the implementation of the new National Strategy for Management of Radioactive Waste for the period of 2017-2026, approved by the Parliament of Moldova in 2017.

Madam President,

My country is supporting IAEA's efforts in building capacities in Member States through education and training of personnel. Earlier this month Moldova hosted the IAEA Regional Workshop on Processing of Radioactive Waste from Decommissioning.

Considering the importance of this topic for the countries in the region, a Scientific Conference on Regional Challenges and Perspectives in

Radioactive Waste Management and Decommissioning Issues with participation of experts from 22 countries from the European region, IAEA and US NRC was organised in September 6-7. The organisation of regional conferences on radioactive waste management issues on an annual basis was among the main proposals agreed by the Conference participants.

My country strongly supports bilateral and regional cooperation in different formats such as the EuCAS network, the Regional Network on Nuclear Forensics, GUAM and other initiatives, as meeting common challenges and applying similar approaches in their overcoming. In this regard, I would like to express my country's gratitude particularly to the IAEA, US DoE, US NRC, US DoD, Swedish Radiation Safety Authority and the EU for provided support.

In conclusion, the Republic of Moldova would like to express its deep gratitude to Director General Yukiya Amano and the IAEA Secretariat for their fruitful activity and assure them of our full support and cooperation as the Agency continues to provide a significant contribution to global peace, security and development.

Thank you for your kind attention.