

STATEMENT BY ESTONIA

64th Annual Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference

Mr. Urmas Reinsalu
Minister of Foreign Affairs

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Mr. President,

I would like to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as President of the 64th General Conference. I assure you our full support and cooperation.

Estonia fully aligns itself with the EU statement delivered by Germany. I would like to highlight some key points for Estonia.

At the outset, we would like to congratulate DG Rafael Grossi for his very first session of the General Conference as Director General of the Agency and commend him for the prompt action taken in response to the Covid-19 crisis. It is impressive that despite of the global pandemic, the Agency not only continued its activities in the realms of maintaining the world's nuclear safety and security, but it also contributed to mitigate the spread of the corona virus by distributing technical equipment and assistance to so many Members States.

Estonia adheres to the valuable role of the Agency in the non-proliferation regime and in ensuring that nuclear material and technology are used only for peaceful purposes. We support universal and effective implementation of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and underline the importance of the Agency's safeguards system in the implementation of that Treaty.

Estonia strongly supports the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and the Agency's long term mission of verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear related commitments. We express our deep concern that Iran has continued to exceed the agreed limits and urge Iran to return the full compliance of the JCPOA.

Estonia welcomes that Iran has agreed to further reinforce their cooperation with the Agency and has provided access to the two locations, as required under the Additional Protocol.

Mr. President,

Although Estonia is a non-nuclear power country, we benefit from the diversity of nuclear science and technology in medicine, industry and education. Through the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme we are establishing our cancer diagnosis and treatment facilities and nuclear medicine centers, with competent, well trained staff and necessary equipment. We also have gained valuable knowledge and expertise that we are now sharing with other Member States.

In the coming years, our main challenge is to build a radioactive waste disposal facility into Estonia by 2040.

Climate change is one of the main global challenges both for multilateral action and regional stability and thus, it is one of our priorities as the non-permanent member of the UN Security Council in 2020-2021. Therefore, we welcome the decision of the Agency to devote this year's Scientific Forum to Nuclear Power and the Clean Energy Transition. The Agency has indeed increased its role in climate and environmental related issues and we encourage the Agency to continue its work in this area.

Mr. President,

To conclude, Estonia recognizes the Agency's central role in strengthening the international nuclear safety and security framework and assisting states in nuclear capacity building. Thank you, Mr. President.