

Statement of Ukraine
at the Intentional Atomic Energy Agency Ministerial Conference on Nuclear
Science, Technology and Applications
and the Technical Cooperation Programme
26–28 November 2024, Vienna, Austria

**Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Ukraine fully aligns itself with the Ministerial Declaration and with the statement delivered by Hungary on behalf of the European Union. In my national capacity, I would like to make the following remarks.

Nuclear science, technology and applications play a pivotal role in advancing humanity's social and economic development. They address immediate challenges while paving the way for a future capable of overcoming emerging threats.

Regrettably, the past three years have brought unprecedented challenges to Ukraine, seriously undermining scientific progress and innovation. Since February 2022, Russia's unprovoked full-scale invasion has devastated Ukraine's scientific and technical infrastructure.

Our nuclear, medical and scientific facilities have become direct targets of military aggression. The illegal seizure of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant and the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone by Russian forces has created unprecedented risks to nuclear safety and security, endangering not only Ukraine but the entire region.

A symbol of Ukraine's scientific heritage - a subcritical nuclear facility the "Neutron Source" at the Kharkiv Institute of Physics and Technology – has suffered catastrophic damage from repeated shelling by Russian forces. This state-of-the-art facility was designed to produce medical radionuclides, train nuclear specialists, study subcritical systems, and conduct groundbreaking experiments.

Similarly, the Biological Dosimetry Laboratory at the Institute of Metrology in the Kharkiv region, equipped with significant IAEA support, was completely

destroyed. Russian troops seized this area at the very beginning of their invasion, destroying all equipment provided by the Agency.

Russia's relentless bombing campaign continues to devastate Ukraine's scientific and medical institutions, research laboratories and training facilities. The aim of these attacks is to ruin Ukraine's scientific and technical potential, undermining decades of collaborative achievements with international partners, including through IAEA programmes.

For instance, the brutal missile attack on 08 July 2024 on the OKHMATDYT National Specialized Children's Hospital — a beneficiary of IAEA Technical Cooperation projects — put lives and crucial radiological equipment at risk. Miraculously, 27 sources of ionizing radiation at the hospital remained intact, preventing an even greater catastrophe.

The ongoing military actions also directly impede Ukraine's ability to initiate and implement technical cooperation projects in conflict zones or temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. Consequently, critical initiatives to advance nuclear safety, improve healthcare through radiopharmaceuticals, and strengthen diagnostic laboratory capacities have been severely delayed or disrupted.

Due to military aggression, all TC project activities in Ukraine were suspended for almost half a year. Equipment deliveries, training of specialists, internships and IAEA expert missions to Ukraine became impossible. Funds initially intended to advance initiatives in the field of safety, health and environment were redirected to eliminating the consequences of the military actions, including rebuilding physical protection systems, replacing damaged equipment, restoring basic working conditions and laboratory facilities.

The war has made such issues as climate change, conservation of aquatic bioresources, and zoonotic disease control critically important for Ukraine. Missile and artillery shelling generate significant heat energy, exacerbating climate change and increasing the spread of infectious diseases. The destruction of the Kakhovka

Hydroelectric Power Plant in 2023, a deliberate act of eco-terrorism, altered the course of the Dnipro River and caused severe ecological harm.

These tragic examples represent only a fraction of the devastation that Ukraine faces. War not only destroys infrastructure; it also erodes irreplaceable human capital—the foundation of innovation and progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals.

In light of these challenges, Ukraine's participation in collaborative research and development initiatives is essential. The Zoonotic Diseases Integrated Action (ZODIAC) programme, for example, will help Ukraine mitigate the risks of pandemics caused by pathogens that affect both humans and animals.

As a recipient of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme, Ukraine deeply values the support received in advancing nuclear science and technology, medicine and diagnostics. This assistance has enabled the acquisition of knowledge, development of the workforce and strengthening of the institutional base in critical sectors.

Distinguished Delegates,

Considering all of the above, Ukraine calls on the IAEA and all Member States to refrain from engaging with the aggressor state, Russia, or conducting any activities — scientific, technical, or otherwise — in the temporarily occupied territories of Ukraine. Such actions risk legitimizing aggression and undermining international law.

On a final note, I take this opportunity to express Ukraine's profound gratitude to the IAEA and its Member States for their steadfast support during these trying times. Together, we can overcome the challenges of war and aggression, ensuring a future in which science serves as a beacon of peace, development and prosperity.

Thank you.