

IAEA GC 69
General Debate
CROATIA

Mr. President, Dear Peter

At the outset, I congratulate you on your election as President of the 69th General Conference and assure you of our full support for the successful leadership of our work during these very challenging times.

Mr. President,

Croatia fully subscribes to the EU statement delivered earlier by Denmark. Kindly allow me to add a few remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to thank the IAEA and Director General Grossi for their steadfast work in upholding nuclear safety, security, and safeguards despite unprecedented number of simultaneous challenges in different parts of the world.

The unrelenting Russia's invasion of Ukraine is fast approaching its fourth year. Occupation of and military operations in and around nuclear sites remain of utmost concern. Nuclear plants must never be used as military targets, shields, or bases of operations and the physical integrity of all nuclear sites must be protected. We urge all parties involved to exercise maximum restraint to prevent a nuclear accident with potentially catastrophic consequences.

In addition to Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine, Croatia remains concerned about ongoing developments in Iran and the DPRK, which continue generating serious risks to regional and global security. We commend the IAEA for its sustained efforts to promote dialogue, transparency, and cooperation - essential pillars for ensuring long-term nuclear safety, security, and the effective implementation of safeguards.

Just, stable and lasting peace cannot be imposed; it must be built through genuine and constructive diplomatic engagement, as well as full compliance with international law and obligations.

Mr. President,

Climate change has long ago transitioned from a future threat to a bleak reality we are facing today. Over the past years, we have been witnessing the extreme consequences of climate change, including wildfires, powerful storms and floods. These events serve as a stark reminder of the urgent need to reduce our dependence on fossil fuels and to lower our overall carbon footprint. In this regard, nuclear technologies become a plausible solution for mitigating the effects of global warming, while still ensuring a sustainable energy necessary for everyone's future and economic growth.

In that context, the Agency's activities in the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology are essential also for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Agreement.

Technological advances in nuclear energy present global challenges that require enhancing national capacities to modernise regulatory frameworks. This is necessary to enable the deployment of small modular reactors as the most viable and, indeed, crucial components of the energy transition and industrial development.

We thank the Agency for organizing a series of educational workshops that have significantly contributed to a better understanding of new technologies among national stakeholders, especially in terms of safety and security. Such initiatives are vital for the responsible and safe application of modern nuclear solutions.

Croatia continues its successful and constructive cooperation with the Agency in the area of radiological and nuclear safety, focusing on strengthening our regulatory framework, technical capacities, and

expertise through the implementation of international standards and active participation in technical cooperation.

In 2025 Croatia has been diligently working on the further improvement of its national regulatory framework in the field of radiological and nuclear safety, through the implementation of international obligations and in line with recommendations from the Agency. Croatian scientists and experts are continuously engaged in regional projects following the priorities of our national framework program, as well as in leading initiatives under the IAEA auspices.

In the Technical Cooperation Programme for 2026 – 2027, Croatia has proposed three national projects that address critical areas for safety and security of radiological and nuclear practices, focusing on radioactive waste disposal, public radiation protection and medical physics. All three projects have been deemed high quality and are ready for implementation pending approval of the overall TC Programme budget.

In addition to these proposals, Croatia is involved in 11 ongoing projects and several other regional initiatives. In the same vein, Croatia continues to maintain and further develop successful bilateral cooperation with countries in its vicinity with nuclear sites on its territory - such as, but not limited to, Slovenia and Hungary – especially in the context of the timely and efficient exchange of information in the event of nuclear and radiological threats.

Mr. President,

Let me conclude by reiterating Croatia's steadfast commitment to the close cooperation with the Agency and by once again wishing all success to this General Conference and to you personally.

Thank you for your kind attention.