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Statement by Iceland

Delivered by Adalheidur Inga Thorsteinsdottir, Director for Arms Control,
Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, Ministry for Foreign Affairs

Mr President,

First, let me congratulate you on assuming the Presidency of this year's General Conference. Iceland also welcomes the Republic of Maldives as a new member of the IAEA.

As we gather here in times of multiple military conflicts and serious challenges to global peace and security, let me start by underlining the pivotal importance of protecting multilateralism and upholding international law, including the architecture for arms control, disarmament and non-proliferation. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is a cornerstone of this system, and the IAEA holds a crucial role in ensuring adherence to its obligations. The Agency's safeguards system remains essential.

Iceland greatly values the professionalism, impartiality, and scientific expertise of the IAEA. As we are witnessing the erosion of nuclear norms, the Agency's work to promote nuclear safety and security is more important than ever.

Mr President,

Russia's unprovoked and illegal war against Ukraine, now in its fourth year, continues to threaten Ukraine's nuclear facilities and endanger nuclear safety and security. Iceland once again condemns Russia's war of aggression in the

strongest terms. Russia must immediately return the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant to the full control of the competent Ukrainian authorities, and unconditionally withdraw all its forces from the entire territory of Ukraine.

We fully support the IAEA's work to provide crucial assistance to Ukraine, and we commend the courage of its staff operating under highly challenging circumstances. We emphasize that the Agency's Five Concrete Principles for protecting the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant must be respected, as well as its Seven Indispensable Pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security during an armed conflict.

Following the deeply concerning developments of recent months, we take positive note of the announcement that an agreement has been reached between Iran and the IAEA on technical measures to resume inspections of Iranian nuclear sites. Iran must comply with its legally binding nuclear safeguards obligations under the NPT and must never be allowed to acquire a nuclear weapon. We call on Iran to remedy its non-compliance by taking all steps deemed necessary by the Agency and immediately enable the resumption of IAEA verification activities. A lasting solution to the Iranian nuclear issue must be sought by diplomatic means.

We remain gravely concerned about the unlawful nuclear activities of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea that continue to undermine regional and global security. We urge the DPRK to return to compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty and Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement, and abandon its nuclear weapons programme in a complete and verifiable manner. The DPRK can never have the status of a nuclear weapon state in accordance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Mr President,

Peaceful uses of nuclear science and technologies contribute to meeting the world's energy needs and improving human health and nutrition, for the benefit of populations across the globe. The IAEA provides essential support to Member States in harnessing these technologies to achieve their development goals and address pressing challenges.

We welcome the Director General's continued work on flagship initiatives, including Rays of Hope, ZODIAC, Atoms4Food and NUTEC Plastics. We also commend the Agency for its commitment to gender equality, within the Secretariat and in the nuclear sector.

In closing, Iceland reiterates its appreciation for the work of the Director General and the Agency's dedicated staff to build a safer and more prosperous world for us all.

Thank you, Mr President.