

**Statement by the Albanian Delegation  
to the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Conference of the IAEA  
As delivered by H.E. Mr. Ilir Beqaj  
Minister of Health, Republic of Albania**

**Mr. President,**

Let me congratulate you upon your election as President of the 59<sup>th</sup> Session of the IAEA General Conference. I wish you well in your endeavors and assure you of our full support.

Albania joins others in welcoming Barbados and Antigua, Barbuda and Turkmenistan as the newest IAEA member states.

Albania fully aligns itself with statement delivered by the European Union. Nonetheless, we would like to add the following remarks in our national capacity.

Since the last General Conference, the Agency has made considerable progress in all fields of its mandatory activities. The IAEA Annual Report for 2014 is a solid document of IAEA's work and achievements which Albania endorses. I will touch upon a few which are of particular importance to my country.

The Technical Cooperation (TC) Programme has particular importance for the majority of the Agency's member states. It promotes our socio-economic development. We have fully supported DG's repeated appeal that nuclear science and technology should be part of the post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda, because 13 out of its 17 SD Goals have a direct relation to nuclear technologies. We are glad that it is now part of these Goals. We also strongly believe that aligning the TC Programme with Member States' national development goals contributes to focusing assistance in priority areas with higher impact.

Albania enjoys an excellent cooperation with the Agency. As of September 2015, it has already successfully implemented its National TC Programme at an exceptional rate of attainment of around 95%. Technical assistance has been in line with national development priorities and will continue to be so. We have benefitted from the support received in several important thematic areas, in particular human health, but also in environment and agriculture.

The fight against cancer is high on the agenda of the Government of Albania. We much appreciate the continued assistance provided by the Agency through its technical cooperation programme, especially within its Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy, to support the successful implementation of our "National Cancer Control Programme". In cooperation with the IAEA and its partners, Albania has managed to introduce, expand and improve its cancer control capacity by integrating radiation medicine into a comprehensive National Cancer Control Programme (NCCP); we have focused activities and investments in all areas of cancer control, namely prevention, surveillance, early detection, diagnosis, treatment, and palliative care into our public health system.

Albania is a Model Demonstration Site for the Agency's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT), and wishes to continue being one for a few more years in view of its full commitment to further strengthen cancer control activities in the country. We are ready to share the experience gained with other Member States.

Albania has witnessed a significant improvement in the quality and safety of its diagnostic and therapeutic cancer services. The Radiotherapy and nuclear medicine Services of the "Mother Teresa" University Hospital Center in Tirana were developed in close cooperation with the Agency and are fully operational. At the same time, the Hospital's radiation protection infrastructure is consistent with IAEA Safety Standards. We are proud that one of our national TC projects has recently been selected as a TC success story with the title "Stronger together: The IAEA and UN partners work with Albania to fight cancer".

We are now focused on further enhancing comprehensive and sustainable cancer control, with emphasis on children and women. Nuclear Medicine services will be expanding activities for patients, and for education of students and medical doctors; radiotherapy services will be strengthened soon with the installation of a new electron beam accelerator. IAEA's further assistance to introduce and consolidate linear accelerator technology in oncology is required and highly appreciated.

I would like to take this opportunity to convey our gratitude to the Agency for its ongoing assistance, and for its valuable contribution and engagement towards furthering our socio-economic development.

**Mr. President,**

The implementation of the IAEA's Action Plan on Nuclear Safety has been a major success. As the DG has stated, nuclear safety all over the world has been strengthened. However, there should be no complacency about safety, which must always come first. My government fully subscribes and is committed to work in this direction.

At a national level, Albania is fully determined to closely cooperate with the Agency to complete in due time its obligations stemming from the various Agency Conventions it is part to.

Albania is committed to do its part in strengthening international co-operation in the field of nuclear security in order to ensure effective prevention, detection, delay and response to security of radioactive materials. We have already reviewed and approved the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan (INSSP) and have started its implementation. Standard Operating procedures for the customs service have been prepared. An adequate regulatory framework, aligned with the relevant international standards, is now in place.

Albania reiterates its appreciation to the Agency for the continuous support aimed at strengthening our national nuclear security regime and improving the radioactive monitoring capacities of the country.

## **Distinguished delegates,**

Albania congratulates the Agency for its crucial contribution to international peace and security through its credible verification activities. Albania lends its full support to DG Amano for the Agency's work and activities aiming at strengthening the ability to verify non-diversion of declared nuclear material and activities, and to conclude that there are no undeclared nuclear material and activities in 65 member states. It is essential that the effectiveness of the safeguards system is maintained and strengthened.

Albania itself has a Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement (CSA) and an Additional Protocol (AP) in force. We echo the Director General's call that all Member States should conclude the CSA and the AP. We are encouraged by the increasing number of AP in force, now reaching 126. We expect that the Additional Protocol will become universal soon.

While sharing the concerns expressed in the EU Statement on DPRK and Syria, Albania joins the call of all Member States requesting that these countries fully and promptly cooperate with the IAEA to resolve all the outstanding issues.

The Albanian Government welcomed the historic agreement reached in Vienna on 14 July 2015 between Iran and China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, and the United States of America, and the related Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. This indicates the commitment of the international community to address outstanding disagreements through peaceful and diplomatic means, to the benefit of global peace and security. Albania joins the calls of the international community in encouraging Iran to take all necessary steps to fully and timely address the concerns of the international community on its nuclear programme.

The Road-map signed by the IAEA Director General and Iran's Vice President on 14 July is another very important step towards clarifying outstanding issues relating to possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme. Albania fully endorses DG's statement that the road-map document is robust and has strict timelines. Albania looks forward to the Director General's report by 15 of December 2015. Albania is confident in the ability of the IAEA to accomplish this important work.

Albania still hopes that the International Conference on Free of Nuclear Weapon Middle East Zone in the Middle East will be organized in due time; this will be a major positive step towards achieving global nuclear disarmament.

Coming to conclusion, Mr. President, I wish once again to express the full support of the Albanian Government to the Agency in the realization of its statutory functions under the excellent guidance of its Director General.