

Statement by
the Head of Delegation of the Republic of Croatia,
Marijan Cesarik, Deputy Minister of Health, Republic of Croatia

Mister President,

on behalf of Croatian delegation, I would like to congratulate you on your election as President of this 59th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. We are convinced that under your guidance this Conference will accomplish its work successfully and I can assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Croatian delegation.

At the outset, allow me to extend our appreciation to the IAEA Director General, Mr. Amano and the Secretariat for their dedicated and professional work that has been accomplished since the last General Conference.

Mr. Amano visited Croatia in May this year where he met with the President of the Republic of Croatia, Minister of Health, Minister of Economy, Minister of Agriculture, Deputy Minister of Science, Education and Sport, Deputy Minister of Foreign and European Affairs, Director General of the State Office for Radiological and Nuclear Safety and other Croatian officials. Mr. Amano also visited University Hospital Centre, Sisters of Charity and Institute Ruđer Bošković in Zagreb.

Strengthening health systems for cancer diagnosis and treatment using nuclear technology, controlling fruit flies in the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean and establishing a radioactive waste storage centre were among the key issues that Mr. Amano discussed with senior officials. We are very grateful to Mr. Amano for offering IAEA's support with the establishment of the radioactive waste storage centre, including training of staff.

Let me also take this opportunity to join the previous speakers in welcoming the applications for membership of the Agency by Antigua and Barbuda, Turkmenistan and Barbados.

Mister President, Your Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Republic of Croatia fully aligned itself with the EU statement. However, I would like to use this opportunity to say a few words in my national capacity.

The IAEAs **safeguards** are the key element of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. Croatia implements the system of integrated safeguards and all nuclear material is used exclusively for peaceful activities. The ratification of the Agreement between the Member States of the European Community, the European Atomic Energy Community and the International Atomic Energy Agency in implementation of the Treaty on the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and Additional Protocol to that Agreement is in the Governmental procedure.

As a Party to all the major **international treaties and conventions** relating to nuclear safety and security, Croatia is fully committed to their implementation.

In that context, Croatia actively participated in the Fifth Review Meeting of the Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, which was held in May 2015. The new national **Strategy** for the Management of Radioactive Waste, Disused Sources and Spent Nuclear Fuel was adopted by the Croatian Parliament in 2014. In this Strategy, Croatia is taking into account requirements set out in the Joint Convention as well as in the Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom establishing a Community framework for the responsible and safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. Amendments to the Act on Radiological and Nuclear Safety was adopted which established the triangle of responsibilities. National programme for the implementation of the Strategy is drafted and Strategic environmental assessment is under way. Implementation has already started with the remediation of the storage facility at the Ruđer Bošković Institute.

Furthermore, Croatia attaches great importance to **bilateral cooperation** in the field of nuclear safety and security.

In 2015, Croatia continued to cooperate with Slovenia on harmonization of emergency planning zones with respect to the vicinity to the Nuclear Power Plant Krško. Year and a half of negotiations resulted with some improvements. However, some issues are still pending to be resolved. Regarding bilateral cooperation with Hungary, Croatia is involved in environmental impact assessment process for construction of two new units at the Paks Nuclear Power Plant site in line with Espoo Convention. Also, bilateral agreement on cooperation between regulatory bodies of Croatia and Serbia is in the process of signing.

Mister President,

Croatia highly values the Agency's work on the Peaceful Application of Nuclear Technology in participating member states.

In 2014, Ministry of Health of the Republic of Croatia hosted the IAEA **Integrated mission of PACT**, for the assessment of the national cancer control programme. Fighting cancer is a key health policy objective in Croatia, with over a quarter of its population affected by the disease. Additional efforts are needed to further strengthen the country's cancer programme, including early detection, diagnosis and treatment.

In 2015, the State Office for Radiological and Nuclear Safety, as the regulatory body for radiological and nuclear safety and security, hosted the IAEA **Integrated Regulatory Review Service Mission** for the assessment of the radiation and nuclear safety legislative and regulatory framework. The IRRS team identified recommendations and suggestions where improvements are necessary which will help Croatia in strengthening the national regulatory infrastructure in line with international safety standards and good practice.

The most important aspect of successful cooperation between Croatia and the Agency is within the framework of the Agency's **Technical Cooperation Programme**, at the national and regional level.

For current biennial project cycle 2014/2015, four national technical cooperation projects have been implemented, covering quality assurance in radiotherapy, self-assessment of the regulatory body, upgrading of irradiation facility and improving capabilities for the application of positron annihilation spectroscopy. For the next biennial project cycle 2016/2017, four national and one regional project proposed by Croatia, have been approved and will be financed jointly by IAEA and Croatia.

Croatia revised the **Country Programme Framework** for setting priorities of technical cooperation with the Agency, which was signed at the end of 2014. Radiation medicine and health stayed as the first priority for the technical cooperation with the IAEA,

followed by radioactive waste management, including nuclear and radiation safety and security.

In conclusion, Mister President let me stress once more that Croatia fully supports the work of the Agency.

Thank you.

