

**Statement by Rimantas Vaitkus**  
**Vice Minister of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Lithuania**  
**At the 44th Session of the General Conference**  
**of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Lithuanian delegation let me congratulate you to be elected the president for this session. We are convinced that the session under your guidance will envisage key nuclear energy to be used for peaceful purposes issues, highlight the outcome of JABA activities, identify trends for the improvement of worldwide significant organization performance. We join a cordial welcome to the delegations of Azerbaijan, Central African Republic and Tadzikistan, that became the members of the JABA.

Our sincere gratitude is also extended to the Director General Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei and we greatly appreciate his fruitful activities at this high office.

On behalf of my delegation I should like to associate myself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of France on behalf of the European Union. Lithuania, being one of the States associated with the European Union, fully shares the common views presented in that statement.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Many changes related to nuclear energy have happened in Lithuania during the period from 43rd General Conference until now. A lot of efforts has been put into safety upgrading of the Ignalina NPP and good results have been achieved in approximating its level to the international nuclear safety standards. Although, bearing in mind its obligations to the international community and willing to become a member of EU in near future, recently Lithuania has taken the serious decisions. On 5th October of 1999 the Seimas adopted a National Energy Strategy, where upon comprehensive assessment of technical, economic and political factors the strategy for further operation of Ignalina NPP was proposed. Unit 1 will be shut down by the year 2005, taking into consideration the terms and conditions of long-term and considerable financial and technical assistance from the European Union, G-7 countries and other states as well as international financial institutions. The Action Plan for the Implementation of the National Energy Strategy, which is developed and carried out in cooperation with appropriate international institutions, shall provide new capacities of electricity, including potential nuclear energy ones. When reviewing the National Energy Strategy in 2004, due account will

be taken of the effective use of the international financial assistance and its ensured continuity. During the remaining operational period safety of Ignalina NPP Unit 1 will be ensured in adequate safety level, following the conditions of license issued by the national regulatory authority.

On 29 February 2000 by the resolution of the Lithuanian Government a Commission has been formed from representatives of different organizations involved in the decommissioning process of Ignalina NPP to co-ordinate all issues relevant to the implementation of the National Energy Strategy as regards Ignalina NPP. On 2nd May this year Lithuanian Parliament - Seimas passed the Law on Decommissioning of Unit 1 of the Ignalina NPP.

The decommissioning of RBMK type nuclear reactor is rather unique and complicated problem that Lithuania faces up. Without having sufficient resources our country will not be able to cope with wide-scale and expensive tasks alone, especially with those issues that require thorough expertise and safety assessment. The Government of Lithuania welcomed the support of international community in decommissioning process of Ignalina NPP and decided to organize an international conference of financial donors. The conference took place last June in Vilnius. The first Donors conference marks the beginning of a long process in future. It is extremely important that participation of the international community in managing the issues of decommissioning of Unit 1 at Ignalina NPP be long — term and continuous. In this regard I would like cordially thank LALA and particularly Deputy Director General Mr. Zygmund Domaratzki for attending the Donors Conference. We appreciate very much a timely and positive response of the Agency to the request of Lithuania to provide support in decommissioning of Ignalina NPP Unit 1 that resulted into the establishment of the technical cooperation project aimed to support the decommissioning process of Unit 1 of Ignalina NPP.

It is clear that decommissioning activities will cause an additional charge and responsibility to national regulatory body and therefore preparatory programme for decommissioning must include means dedicated for strengthening of regulatory body capabilities. It also must provide the possibility to use of independent experts both in reviewing licensing documents and for preparation of regulatory requirements. Notwithstanding our inexperience in the decommissioning field, Lithuanian regulatory authority under the support of European Union has prepared the General Requirements for Decommissioning of Ignalina NPP, based on IAEA recommendations on decommissioning and radioactive waste management, ICRP, EU directives. This document establishes main safety criteria and requirements for Decommissioning of Ignalina NPP as well as for preparatory work before and during final shutdown and provides licensing requirements.

Mr. President,

We appreciate very much the activities of the Agency aimed to support this process by establishing appropriate safety standards and guidelines for decommissioning as well as technical cooperation projects. This support is very important for all member states and particularly for Ukraine and Lithuania, which have to manage decommissioning of RBMK type reactors in near term. In the light of outlined above Lithuania strongly supports the nomination of Ukraine candidature as a member of IAEA Board of Governors for the term 2000-2002.

Though sunset is usually very pleasant to watch, sunrise contains in itself more hope and promise. Lithuania has no intention to renounce nuclear energy totally in the future. In this aspect we support very much the intention of the Agency to create a task force on innovative reactors and fuel cycles. Lithuania as a country with small electricity grid can be interested in new small or medium size reactors.

Mr. President,

As a state with strong commitment to nuclear non-proliferation issues Lithuania strongly supports new activities of the Agency in this area. New measures of the IAEA safeguards, related to the Additional Protocol, would play an important role in this regard. Lithuania actively joined this initiative and ratified the Protocol in 2000. We urge other countries to sign and ratify Additional Protocol as soon as possible. Concerning nuclear materials other than traditional uranium and plutonium, we welcome the Agency efforts to monitor the separation and export of neptunium and americium.

For Lithuania, the safety of its nuclear facilities and security of nuclear materials is one of the most important priorities. In this respect, we are very grateful to the IAEA for the IPPAS mission and assistance in implementation of its recommendations. Lithuania supports the discussions whether there is a need to revise the Convention on the Physical protection of Nuclear Material. This discussion will answer not only the question on necessity of revision the Convention, but also it reveals common approach to solving the problems, related to physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities.

Lithuania also recognizes the importance of export control to curb nuclear proliferation. Speaking about international transfer of nuclear material, equipment and technology and dual-use equipment, materials, software and related technology, the Government of the Republic of Lithuania adopted the resolutions corresponding to the Guidelines of Nuclear Suppliers Group.

Another important result in adhering national legislation to internationally accepted principles is ratification of Convention on Assistance in the case of Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency this year.

We can eagerly support the statement by the Director General that each country, recipient of Technical Co-operation Programme, has its successes to report. During several last years, using the active assistance of the Agency, significant progress was made in the areas of management of radiation sources, nuclear medicine, radiotherapy, planning of nuclear power, training of NPP personnel. I am glad to inform you that with every year the number of specialists from member states undergoing training in Lithuania is increasing.

Regretfully Lithuania is still a “problematic child” concerning fulfillment of its financial obligations towards the Fund of Technical Co-operation. But recent detailed discussions in the Government on the substantial role of Technical Co-operation Programme in the development of country’s economy, health protection and other areas enabled us to make a pledge of voluntary contribution for year 2001.

I think that would be also meaningful to mention the valuable assistance obtained from the participation of Lithuanian regulatory authorities and nuclear facilities in the ISOE activities. where the positive results has been achieved in reducing the occupational exposure. We hope that further participation in the ISOE activities will help to make sound decisions in order to strengthen the radiation protection and nuclear safety in Lithuania.

By this, let me finish my presentation on the main Lithuania’s developments in nuclear field.

Mr. President, I am confident that the forty-fourth General Conference will succeed in solving the most important problems the world faces in using nuclear energy.

Thank you for attention.