

**STATEMENT OF THE RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE OF THE**

**REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA**

**H.E. IVO VAJGL**

**AT THE 44<sup>th</sup> GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC  
ENERGY AGENCY**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Slovenia I would like to extend our warmest congratulations on your election as President of the 44<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency and on election of other members of Bureau. You may rest assured of our full co-operation in discharging your important responsibilities.

It also gives me great pleasure to congratulate Dr. El-Baradei, the Director General of the Agency and the Secretariat for their successful work in the past year.

I would like to warmly welcome the Republic of Tajikistan, the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the Central African Republic, which have joined us as new member states.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the East European Group for nominating Slovenia to chair the Committee of the Whole and the other Member States for their unanimous support.

Slovenia associates itself with the statement delivered by France on behalf of the European Union as well as of the associated countries. Therefore, I shall only highlight a few areas of special importance to Slovenia.

Mr. President,

Nuclear verification and safeguards activities of the Agency are of utmost importance for the whole international community, and also for Slovenia.

Therefore we express our satisfaction with the outcome of this year NPT Review Conference, by quoting its final document *»the conference reaffirms the fundamental importance of full compliance with the provisions of the Treaty and the relevant safeguards agreements«* and *»recognises that IAEA safeguards are a fundamental pillar of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, play an indispensable role in the implementation of the Treaty and help to create an environment conducive to nuclear disarmament and to nuclear co-operation«*. Slovenia recognises and stresses the importance of signing and ratifying the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. As a state party, which has already ratified the CTBT we urge all states to do so and thus enable its early entering into force. My delegation furthermore subscribes itself among those states urging for immediate initiation of a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty negotiations. Hopefully the NPT Review Conference results will give a fresh impetus to strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation regime throughout the world; within this regime, development and implementation of a new integrated safeguards approach is a matter of highest priority.

I am pleased to state that the Slovenian Parliament ratified the Protocol Additional to the Safeguards Agreement between the Republic of Slovenia and the IAEA in July this year. At the same time we urge all states that have not yet signed and put into force Safeguards Agreements and Additional Protocols to do so.

Since 1992, when Slovenia joined the Agency, we voluntarily opted for unshielded regime of financing the IAEA Safeguards activities. My delegation therefore welcomes a compromise solution reached at the last Board meeting on financing of safeguards with a gradual elimination of shielding system.

With respect to compliance with its commitments arising from the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, the Parliament of the Republic of Slovenia adopted in March 2000 the Law on Export of Dual Use Items to enforce the control over export of equipment, material and technology which may be used for production of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, or for production of ballistic missiles, ammunition and explosives. Based on this law the Government of Slovenia issued in May 2000 a decree containing the list of items, which is identical to the EU export control regime for dual-use goods. With newly adopted legal instruments and corresponding law enforcement, Slovenia meets the NSG measures for nuclear non-proliferation that are set in the IAEA documents INFCIRC 254/Part I and Part II and participated as an observer in this year NSG plenary meeting. It is worth mentioning that Slovenia became also a member of the Zangger Committee in April this year.

Mr. President,

My delegation believes that well established international safety framework with its legally binding instruments is a precondition for peaceful use of nuclear energy as well as an important element of global safety culture for improving nuclear, radiation and waste safety world wide. Last year First Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety proves and carries into effect the expectations of the international community and confirms to be of great value for national nuclear safety programmes. The basis of internationally binding legal regime has been established also in the area of radwaste safety. The Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and the Safety of Radioactive Management has been opened for signature, but not yet entered into force. As a country, which already ratified it, we urge all member states to do their best to allow its early entering into force. Besides these two conventions also other safety related conventions are of great interest to us: while we believe that notification and assistance conventions have already reached the status of the so-called »global conventions«, the physical protection convention and liability conventions should be adhered by more member states in order to obtain a universal status.

Slovenia highly appreciates the services provided by the Agency. From the very beginning of our nuclear programme, Slovenia invited all relevant IAEA missions as for example OSART, WAMAP, IPERS, IPPAS, TranSAS, IRRT, and we consider to invite for the third time the IAEA OSART Mission to Slovenia in 2002.

Mr. President,

Let me now turn to the issue of the Agency's Technical Co-operation activities. In recognition of the importance that Slovenia attaches to this programme, it is my pleasure to announce that Slovenia has pledged as always in the past its full share to the TC Fund for the year 2001 and

that Slovenia fulfilled its financial obligations towards assessed programme costs for 1999. Furthermore it is worth mentioning that last year Slovenia hosted 9 Agency's meetings, training courses or workshops especially in the area of nuclear safety, and also in other areas; in addition it also provided on-the-job-training and made available its experts for TC.

We are looking forward to learning more about the Agency's experience with country programme frameworks and the model projects. My delegation believes that TC projects are of utmost importance since there are ways to resolve common problems through the co-operation of countries in the region. Slovenia supports and appreciates the Agency's efforts also in this area.

For the 2001-2002 cycle Slovenia submitted to the Agency some new project proposals, recognising the »Production facility for cyclotron produced short – lived medical radioisotopes« as the one with the highest priority.

At this point let me just turn shortly to finalisation of modernisation programme of the Krško NPP, which was going on for several years and completed successfully this year. Replacement of steam generators with power upgrade is a major activity within this programme, which includes also the supply of a full-scope simulator. Steam generators were replaced and licensing process was finalised during the outage 2000, while the full scope simulator was supplied, installed and tested and finally licensed in March 2000. One part of this demanding project was carried out with the support of the IAEA TC project under which the Agency advised the Slovenian Nuclear Safety Administration on the appropriateness of our methodology for assessing the safety reports. The modernisation programme is expected to extend the lifetime of the plant and to increase its availability and operational safety.

We would also like to stress the importance of the work being performed by the Agency in the area of emergency preparedness and response. A number of radiological accidents in last years proves that developing and adequate national and international emergency preparedness and response capabilities are an essential element in coping with the consequences of such accidents. Slovenia is taking part in the Agency's project RER/9/058 and is actively involved in all activities with respect to emergency preparedness.

Mr. President,

Finally, let me just briefly mention also last year General Conference resolutions on Amendment of Article VI and Article XIV.A of the Statute. As a member state, which has played an active role in the deliberation of these issues over past years, I am pleased to point out that Slovenia already ratified both amendments and deposited its instrument of acceptance by the depository of the Statute on April 3, 2000. We share the view expressed by the Agency's Secretariat that early acceptance of the amendments by Member States resulting in their early coming into force is an important contribution to enhancing the role and efficiency of the Agency.

In conclusion, Mr. President, I wish you success in carrying out the tasks that remain till the General Conference is finished.

Thank you, Mr. President.