

**STATEMENT**

**by**

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**President of the**

**State Office for Nuclear Safety**

**Czech Republic**

**at the 46<sup>th</sup> General Conference**

**of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

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Mr. President,

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the present IAEA General Conference session and I am convinced that under your wise guidance combined with enthusiastic and co-operative approach of Delegates this conference will achieve important and fruitful results.

At the outset I would also like to thank Mr. ElBaradei, the Director-General, for his informative and comprehensive opening statement.

It is also great pleasure to welcome the state of Eritrea, Kyrgyz Republic and Seychelles to the family of the Member States of the Atomic Energy Agency.

The Czech Republic has associated itself with the statement delivered by Denmark on behalf of the European Union. Mr. President, therefore I would like to touch only upon some of the topics that are of particular importance to my country.

Mr. President,

Distinguished delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The efforts of the IAEA are globally scrutinised in light of present debate on global security problems and role of nuclear energy in sustainable development. The key role of the Agency is in helping mankind to maximise the benefits and minimise the risks emanating from nuclear sciences and their applications. The international community expects the Agency to continue playing its important part under the three pillars of its mandate, that is verification, safety and technology. In previous period the IAEA succeeded, to our opinion, successfully in achieving its main objectives, that is to serve as a unique platform for transfer of nuclear science and technology, to build and maintain global nuclear safety regime, to guard against proliferation of nuclear weapons and strengthen the security and physical protection of nuclear material and facilities.

Mr. President,

My country has continued to work hard with other countries to strengthen the global non-proliferation regime and its verification.

The recent completion of ratification by the Czech Parliament of the Protocol Additional to the Safeguards Agreement signed between the IAEA and the Czech Republic is the most visible contribution to these efforts in the last period. Fast and full implementation of the Protocol sits among the highest priorities of involved state administration. We would like to use this opportunity to urge those who have not done so, to conclude similar protocols with the Agency without delay, to make the strengthened safeguards system as broad as possible and universal.

From the very beginning of international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy supplier countries have recognised the responsibility to ensure that such co-operation activities do not contribute to the proliferation of nuclear weapons. This principle is reflected in the NPT and in the multilateral regimes on export controls supporting the Treaty. In our view the Nuclear Suppliers Group together with Zangger Committee play an important role in support of the NPT and non-proliferation in general. The Czech Republic which currently chairs the NSG, attaches

high priority to the Group's dialogue with other countries - potential nuclear suppliers, incl. those operating unsafeguarded nuclear installations. In doing so we are as transparent and cooperative as possible in order to pursue the non-proliferation objectives.

Last but not least, the Czech Republic will not stay aside of new initiatives in the area of protection against nuclear terrorism including the Agency's Plan of Action. Both in-kind and financial contributions are under consideration by relevant state administration at present. One of the most important tools of prevention against terrorism is, in our view, stringent physical protection. The Czech Republic has strongly supported all the IAEA activities to strengthen physical protection of nuclear materials and nuclear facilities world-wide, including the revision of the CPPNM. However, together with the EU, we regret that the Open-ended Group of Legal and Technical Experts to prepare a draft amendment of the CPPNM has not been able to conclude its work. We hope that the proposal for a draft amendment will be finalised during the next session of the Group in November which will enable to convene a Diplomatic Conference before the end of this year in order to approve and confirm the strengthening of the Convention.

Mr. President,

The Czech Republic belongs to the group of countries with broad employment of Nuclear Technology to satisfy various needs of its society.

In our view most of the nuclear technology non-power applications in human health, food and agriculture and chemical and physical sciences are able to bring distinct economic and social benefits in any part of the world. Of course any such use shall be carefully tailored to specific needs and existing infrastructure of individual country or region. In this context the Czech Republic recognises the importance of technical co-operation among the Member States. With the aim to contribute to these endeavours Czech organisations and individual experts take active part in various co-operative programmes and other IAEA sponsored activities in order to encourage sound progress in the development and peaceful use of nuclear energy in Europe and other regions. As in previous years, the Czech Government allocated additional financial resources to support activities under the Agency's TC Programme and offered voluntary contributions to specific projects in Armenia, Georgia and Ukraine. Despite this the Czech Republic also welcomes all the efforts in allocating TC funds efficiently to the activities of the Agency that are indispensable in its respective major programmes. Results based oriented

approach employed in process of planning for the programme and budget 2004– 2005 is, to our opinion, appropriate vehicle for achieving more efficient funds spending not only in TC area.

Since the Czech Republic is a country with scarce energy resources, nuclear power is an important part of energy mix. Currently, about 20% of the country's electricity is generated by four units of Dukovany NPP, commissioning of two NPP Temelin units is in progress. When on full power, the installed capacity of Czech NPPs will more than double. Both NPP Temelin units faced and experienced a number of technical problems mainly in its conventional non-nuclear part in the past year. Nevertheless, the first unit arrived at the stage of full power trial operation this year in June.

Mr. President,

Mentioning the NPP Temelin subject I cannot fail to mention the nuclear safety issues. I have to underline, that the Czech Government attaches the utmost importance to the safety of nuclear installations operated on its territory. In order to demonstrate this, the system of nuclear safety assessment continues to be based on the principles of independence and transparency. Peer reviews organised by the Agency are important part of the safety assessment structure in the Czech Republic. Bringing both independent outside opinion and internationally recognised expertise, missions to the NPP Temelin and Dukovany organised under the IAEA umbrella in the end of the last year again confirmed very good situation in all aspects of safety and offered a number of ideas for further improvements. In this respect, allow me, Mr. President, to use this opportunity and express once again words of appreciation both to the individual Member States making their experts available and to the Secretariat, in particular to the Department of Nuclear Safety and the Department of Technical Co-operation of the Agency.

However, we are concerned over the attempts to exclude Agency's peer review services from the regional Technical Co-operation Programme. High level of safety of nuclear installations and workplaces with sources of radioactive and ionising radiation, physical protection or radiation protection are among constraints for any use of nuclear technologies and it is logical that this principle is also applied before any TC project is launched. It is useless to reiterate the importance of independent third party peer reviews in maintaining and further developing safety and security levels in use of nuclear energy and ionising radiation. The same applies for re-emphasising complexity and well-defined framework for conduct of review services offered by the

Agency, such as OSART,IRRT or IPPERS missions. Nevertheless, worth mentioning is the unique design of Agency's review services allowing sharing the experience gained and results achieved at least in interested groups, such as users of similar technology or regulatory authorities. Offering platform for experience and information sharing and discussion of common issues is one of the most important missions of the regional part of the TC programme.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me reassure you of my Government's continued commitment to supporting and expanding the Agency role in international co-operation, in peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy and ionising radiation for the benefit of all Member States.

Thank you Mr. President.