

**STATEMENT OF THE STATE UNION
OF SERBIA AND MONTENEGRO**

TO THE 49. SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE
OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

By Aleksandar Popovic,
Minister of Science and Environmental Protection
of the Republic of Serbia

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Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Delegation of Serbia and Montenegro I would like to extend to you, Mr. President, and to the other members of the Bureau, sincere congratulations on your election for the President of the Forty Ninth Session of the IAEA General Conference and to assure you of a full support of my delegation.

Furthermore, I would like to take this opportunity to express all appreciation for the invaluable work of the Director General, Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, and to address congratulations for his appointment for that high post with an extremely important and responsible task as it is further heading the Secretariat of the Agency in the forthcoming period. I would also compliment to his associates and staff on the excellent and professional work between the two conferences.

It is my pleasure to welcome warmly Belize as a new Member States of this big family of the IAEA.

On behalf of my delegation, I associate myself fully with the statement of the European Union and the associated countries and will therefore emphasize in my statement only those issues to which Serbia and Montenegro attaches a particular importance.

Mr. President,

We understand the combat against the global terrorism as a matter of the greatest importance and a common concern and task of all the countries of the international community. Recognizing a potential threat, wishing to give its contribution to a global security, my country expressed its commitment to that goal in 2002, when removal of the fresh nuclear fuel from the "Vinča" Institute of Nuclear Sciences was successfully completed and the fuel transported to the country of origin for reduction of enrichment. That was a part of the tripartite initiative by the IAEA, USA Government and Russian Federation and a non-governmental organization NTI. Their further assistance as well as support of other actors of international community is crucial in proceeding to removal of the spent nuclear fuel from the RA research reactor and other activities of nuclear decommissioning in that institute. Both the Government of the Republic of Serbia where the Institute is situated, and the State Union itself, are strongly committed to accomplishing that goal and so help protecting human health and environment and contribute to universal security.

Following its traditional commitment to peaceful uses of nuclear energy Serbia and Montenegro strongly supports a strengthened comprehensive safeguards system and verification role of the Agency, essential in preventing proliferation of nuclear weapons and improving collective security. As expression of such an attitude, Serbia and Montenegro has already informed the Secretariat of the Agency on its intent to conclude the Protocol Additional to the Safeguards Agreement. I want to stress this commitment once again and importance of the efforts in preparation and associated activities to enable its implementation. To that aim and towards the better understanding of the procedures and necessary undertakings, assistance of the Agency is indispensable not only to my country where the complex state structure poses an additional procedural burden, but, I believe, to a great number of states which are on the same path.

Mr. President,

We want to express our satisfaction over the results achieved with dedicated efforts in a pretty short period of renewed membership in the Agency. This is even more considerable when one has in mind competing for funds, staffing and attention with the other important fields, as well as setting up a great number of national systems and mechanisms in parallel, a long period of absence in international relations and lack of international assistance. A specific state structure and restoration of the state statutory systems and responsibilities create a need for a strengthened and accelerating assistance and support of the Agency which was crucial so far and which is inevitable for further improvements of the national infrastructure and international cooperation and integration in the forthcoming period, since there is still many tasks to be completed.

In the current TC cycle improvement has been made not only in number of activities and projects, but also in a quality of cooperation which now involves more areas and stakeholders comparing to the previous cycles. I want to stress once again the importance of dedicated work and professionalism of the leadership and staff of the Technical Cooperation Department, and Europe Section in particular, for successful performing and realization of cooperation and to thank them for their understanding for our complexity when the procedures are concerned.

Being a very important issue at this stage of development process in our country, a special attention is attached to those fields and modalities of cooperation where the assistance of the Agency contributes to establishing and improving national systems, mechanisms and procedures of national and international coordination. Serbia and Montenegro receives a considerable number of expert missions in different fields (nuclear security, health, regulatory infrastructure, nuclear safety etc.) and their reports and findings are an important tool for assessing national infrastructure, setting up the goals, and develop plans for their realization. Not of a less importance is upgrading of professional knowledge and skills and I would like, Mr. President, to mention that during the last year a

number of experts and professionals received training and other types of education or took part in conferences, meetings and workshops with an opportunity to exchange their experiences and information with their colleagues and so to expand and improve their knowledge.

Mr. President,

Permanently expanding its active involvement in regional and national technical cooperation projects from various fields, respecting the specific needs of each of two republics with the different nuclear infrastructure and capacities, Serbia and Montenegro is, we believe, on a good way towards further improvement of its national infrastructures and international cooperation.

Further efforts in the field of technical cooperation are addressed to the fields indicated in the Country Program Framework, and in particular to the “Vinča” nuclear decommissioning activities, as the top priority. Upgrading regulatory infrastructure, human health and environmental protection sectors, are, together with the important nuclear security issues, among the focuses of our attention. I would also like to stress that in the forthcoming period, successful completion of the tasks of the Regulatory Commission for Nuclear Safety – a temporary regulatory authority established particularly for the purposes of realization of Vinca Nuclear Decommissioning Program, could not be fully and properly completed without a support and technical assistance of the Agency. Assistance of the Agency in the forthcoming period in the process of preparation and implementation of the Code of Conduct of Radioactive Sources, other codes of conduct, international conventions and other documents is certainly indispensable.

In conclusion, Mr. President, as already emphasized on many occasions, I would like to stress that my country fully supports a strengthening of the safety and security systems and integrated and universal safeguards and verification role of the Agency and its Importance in all the other activities in concern with the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. I would mention once again the importance of the

technical support of the Agency which, was and will be in the an
evitable milestone of the overall cooperation in particular for those
member states, as it is my country, which have a considerable
number tasks to complete what would be difficult without the further
assistance and support of the Agency.

Thank you.