



Vijeće ministara Bosne i Hercegovine – Ministarstvo civilnih poslova
Савјет министара Босне и Херцеговине – Министарство цивилних послова
Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina – Ministry for Civil Affairs

STATEMENT BY H.E. MR. SREDOJE NOVIC,
MINISTER FOR CIVIL AFFAIRS, HEAD OF DELEGATION OF
BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

52. IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE
Vienna 29.09. – 04.10.2008

Check against delivery

Mr. Chairman,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you on your election for the Chairman of the 52nd IAEA General Conference, and to wish you success in chairing the Conference.

Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is my honor and privilege to address you today on behalf of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Ministry of Civil Affairs which is in charge of the issues related to the work of IAEA at the state level.

Before I go any further, I would like to mention that Bosnia and Herzegovina fully associates itself with the statement to be delivered at the General Conference by the delegation of France, on behalf of European Union.

Several significant events in the field of radiation and nuclear security marked the last year in Bosnia and Herzegovina. I would like to emphasize important activities of particular interest for the State. In order to respond to the obligations that arise from the Stabilization and Association Agreement and to implement the Decision of the Council of Ministers on harmonization of BiH legislation with EU *acquis communautaire*, the "Law on Radiation and Nuclear Security" came into force last year, establishing the State Regulatory Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Security as an independent administrative body. Council of Ministers appointed acting director of the Agency, while the activities for establishing the Agency and creation of necessary regulations are ongoing under the mentioned law so as to ensure smooth functioning of the Agency. This Agency will be responsible for the creation of the state level policy and establishment of the nuclear security as well as the system for protection against the radiation in BiH.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the IAEA representatives for technical assistance provided during the drafting procedure of the law and for the suggestions regarding the State Regulatory Agency, in view of the specific needs of BiH.

It will take considerable time for the Agency to become fully operational and ready to carry out its activities. The first step we need to make on this road is employment of qualified staff. It is planned that the Agency takes over existing staff from the entity regulatory bodies and to make public announcement for the rest of vacancies. This entails a new problem, training of the staff, since there is no educational institution in BiH that provides specialized training in the field of radiation protection. However, I need to emphasize that the IAEA has again offered its assistance, and that we will additionally train our staff through various projects.

The next step would be creation of the accompanying legislation (rules, guidelines, instructions etc.) in order to complete the legal framework. Existing legislation in this field in BiH is only partly in accordance with the Basic Safety Standards because many important documents issued by the IAEA in the past several years have not been incorporated into our legislation. Furthermore, through the assistance of the IAEA we found a partner – an EU country which is ready to assist us in the process of

drafting regulation that is based on their experience. I would like to thank the representatives of the Spanish Regulatory Authority for Nuclear Security, which agreed to help us in the next period, with the IAEA playing the coordinating role. I hope that this cooperation will enable our State Regulatory Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Safety to become fully operational soon, and to begin to carry out its legally prescribed duties.

This General Conference is an opportunity for us to promote the work of our Agency through the exchange of experience with other countries, so that the Agency could successfully respond to obligations arising from the "Program of the BiH Integration into the EU".

Bosnia and Herzegovina has manifested its full readiness to abide by the international instruments related to the IAEA activities so far and we will continue to do so in the future. To that end, Ministry that I am in charge of initiated the procedure for adoption of the following legal instruments: "Convention on Nuclear Safety", amendments to the "Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material", "Revised Supplemental Agreement on IAEA Technical Assistance to the BiH Council of Ministers", and "Code of Conduct on Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources", particularly in view of the fact that BiH is one of the few countries that have not adopted the above instruments.

It is our goal to continue the activities through the State Regulatory Agency to broaden substantive international cooperation. I expect that we will ratify the Code of Conduct by the end of the year, as an instrument that will supplement legal measures to provide fulfillment of requirements and international standards. Also, it is my pleasure to announce that the Presidency of BiH on its 45th Session held on the 19th September this year made the Decision to accede to the "Agreement on the Privileges and Immunities of the IAEA".

We expect the European Commission IPA regional and country projects to significantly contribute to the establishment of the entire infrastructure necessary to implement the above standards of the IAEA and the EU directives. These projects will help BiH, as one of beneficiaries of the IPA instruments, to make better overview of legislation in the field of nuclear security and radiation protection and to establish or advance its capacities to incorporate EURATOM Directive, international instruments, standards and recommendations into its own legislation. The IAEA has important role in this process as well, because the European Commission IPA projects are implemented in BiH with full cooperation and coordination with the IAEA. Thereby the possibility of overlapping and duplicating projects is avoided, thus avoiding unreasonable spending of funds that are very important for us.

Mr. Chairman,

In this context, I would like to emphasize that, through development of the country policy, we will focus on the radiation protection and nuclear security. Through the creation of regulations, we will improve regulatory framework and harmonize relevant state infrastructure that will strengthen legal ground for all activities in this field. As always, BiH will continue to meet its obligations as to the contributions to the IAEA budget.

Bosnia and Herzegovina would like to express its gratitude to the IAEA for the assistance through various project activities that had very positive effect on the

health care system and health of population. Particularly, very successful implementation of the projects from the radiotherapy, nuclear medicine and environmental protection should be pointed out.

Through the project of "Strengthening nuclear medicine in BiH", which has multiple goals and it is active in its several technical cooperation cycles, continuous training of our staff is established, while the donations of equipment are also important. So far, our clinical centers have received three gamma cameras, which are very expensive and sophisticated devices. Since they were installed, waiting for certain diagnostics is significantly reduced. Moreover, there has been staff training for the two therapy centers constructed through financing from our funds, so our patients do not have to use the services from the clinical centers from the neighboring countries. In the future, we plan to introduce positron emission tomography, and I hope that the significant support of the IAEA will be forthcoming.

The second important field in the health care is radiotherapy. Unfortunately, there is only one radiotherapy center in BiH, in Sarajevo, and it cannot respond to the needs of the ever increasing number of patients. Having in mind the trend of increase of cancer, this problem will be more present in the following years. Therefore the preparations for opening of the two new radio-therapy centers, in Banja Luka and Tuzla, are in progress. Again, I would like to take the opportunity to thank the IAEA for its assistance in equipping the radio-therapy center in Sarajevo. Through the technical cooperation projects we received a unit with Cobalt 60 and the complete system for brachytherapy with high doses. With existing equipment and continuing training in new operating methods, we can say that his center has become one of the most modern radio-therapy centers in the region.

In April, Bosnia and Herzegovina had an honor to welcome high delegation of the IAEA, led by the Director General, Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei. This visit was used to define priorities in cooperation between BiH and the IAEA. BiH belongs to the group of nine countries of the Region in which the country technical cooperation projects have priority over regional projects, which will be used in the next period to expand the cooperation with the Agency in the fields and programs non-existing in BiH so far. These are primarily the projects in agriculture, industry, energy sector and resolving the issue of radioactive waste. The emphasis was given to the need for accelerated equipping of border crossings with necessary infrastructure to prevent illegal transport of radioactive and nuclear materials, as well as on continuation of activities on increasing radiation and nuclear security. Also, the IAEA offered assistance in resolving the problem of brucellosis which has become increasingly serious in BiH. Particularly, the Agency has implemented small-scale program in Macedonia for detection of this disease and for food irradiation by using nuclear technologies, which could be applied in BiH in similar way.

Although exporter of the electricity, BiH belongs to the group of countries that do not generate energy from nuclear plants, but it should be mentioned that our electric companies use software WASP for planning of the needs and future development. The software was developed by the Agency experts.

Decision has been made to begin with creation of the new Country Framework program for BiH. The existing Program was signed in the beginning of 2004 and now we need to define priorities for the next mid-term period.

Implementation of the Decision of the Council of Ministers on Action Plan for Implementation of the Technical Regulations Program will be the priority of the Council of Ministers in the forthcoming period.

In accordance with the priorities of the international community, BiH will continue to support activities through the State Regulatory Agency to fight against illegal trafficking of radioactive material. Therefore, on this occasion I would like to thank the Department of Technical Cooperation for Europe for timely and quality implementation of various projects in BiH.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

At the end, I would like to reiterate that BiH, through the newly established State Regulatory Agency, will show its full commitment and dedication in supporting programs focused on human health, while the Council of Ministers will provide necessary support to our Agency in implementation of its legal functions.

Thank you for your attention.