

The 53rd IAEA General Conference
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**Statement by
H.E. Mr. Mario Horvatić**

**Head of Delegation of the Republic of Croatia
Director General of the State Office for Nuclear Safety**

Madam President,

Allow me to join other distinguished speakers in congratulating you on your election as President of the 53rd General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Convinced that under your guidance the Conference will accomplish its work successfully, I can assure you and the other members of the Bureau and the Secretariat of the full support and cooperation of Croatian delegation in your efforts to make this Conference a success.

Let me also take this opportunity to welcome the application for membership of the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of Rwanda as new Member States of the Agency.

At the outset, I would like to join others in thanking Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei on behalf of the Republic of Croatia and express our deepest appreciation for his leadership and accomplishments as Director General of the Agency in the past 12 years. Personally, I had the privilege to closely work with him for two years when serving as representative of my country on the Board of Governors and to witness his integrity, sincerity, commitment and devotion with which he has led the Agency.

I would also like to welcome and convey my warm congratulations to the new Director General, Ambassador Yukiya Amano, whose appointment has been approved during this General Conference. Having also had the privilege to work with Ambassador

Amano, I am convinced that he will continue to steer this organization in the right direction and to the benefit of all its Member States.

Madam President,

The Republic of Croatia aligned itself with the statement of the EU, delivered by the distinguished representative of Sweden.

However, let me stress some issues of particular interest to my country.

The IAEA is the world's focal point for peaceful nuclear co-operation and nuclear safety and it has an indispensable role in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons; especially since we have been facing the new security challenges and threats, foremost the nuclear terrorism.

The three pillars of the IAEA – verification, safety and technology – have been valid for the past 53 years. All pillars are important and interdependent.

Croatia supports international initiatives in non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and the peaceful use of nuclear technology. We actively participated in adopting International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We monitor with keen interest the ratification process of the Convention Amendment. We note with appreciation the latest note verbal from the Secretariat that Norway has also deposited an instrument of approval of the Amendment. We are looking forward to obtaining required two-third majority of State Parties soon.

At the national level, Croatia established relevant institutional capacities for prevention of illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive material.

Furthermore, Croatia participated in the Third Review Meeting of the Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of

Radioactive Waste Management in Vienna this year and successfully presented its Third National Report.

My country was one of the first Member States that signed and ratified the Additional Protocol. Additionally, the last year revised Small Quantity Protocol, as part of the Agreement for the Application of Safeguards in Connection with the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, has been brought in force in my country too.

Madam President,

Let me use this opportunity to call on all States that have not yet signed, ratified and implemented Additional Protocol to do so without further delay. We also call on all states with SQP to conclude an exchange of letters with the Agency to give effect to the standardized text and modified criteria.

Finally, I am pleased to inform you that Croatia implements the system of integrated safeguards and that all nuclear material in Croatia remains in peaceful activities.

Madam President,

One of the most important aspects of successful cooperation between Croatia and the Agency is within the framework of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme, which operates intensively and successfully.

One should not underestimate IAEA's development role, as a focal point for peaceful nuclear co-operation.

Croatia expresses its gratitude for the assistance provided through a wide range of ongoing technical cooperation projects and concluded research agreements, which have made positive impact in the various fields of peaceful use of nuclear energy and techniques.

For the new triennial project cycle 2009/2011, five national projects have been implemented, covering radiation application in medicine, improvement of nuclear and radiation safety infrastructure and implementation of nuclear techniques in environmental protection, based on priorities set in the document Country Programme Framework for the present technical cooperation with the Agency. We hope that a revised Country Programme Framework for future technical cooperation with the Agency will be finalized soon, taking into account new Croatian energy strategy.

Croatia extends its full support to the Agency's activities for enhancement of regional cooperation and exchange of knowledge through the regional projects. Croatia actively participates in regional projects either as leading country or through the organization of meetings and workshops in Croatian research and other relevant institutions. Also, a large and growing number of foreign experts are trained in Croatian institutions under the Agency fellowships programme.

The Member States in the Europe region recognized regional cooperation as the best mechanism to promote effective and open exchange of know-how and experience, and are moving towards the preparation of a strategy for technical cooperation, which Croatia strongly supports.

Madam President,

Let me briefly touch upon the financial issues of the Agency. For years now we have been discussing and negotiating for days and months every budget proposal. This issue is of particular importance today when we are facing global financial crisis. As the Director General ElBaradei has many times emphasized - without adequate financing, the Agency will not be able to fulfill its statutory tasks. Beside the budget decisions and negotiations, one should also take care of budget commitments and obligations. I would like to stress that Croatia is continuously fulfilling its financial obligations and expects from all Member States to do the same, for our common benefit, security and prosperity.

Thank you.