

STATEMENT

By H.E. Mr. Cornel FERUȚĂ
Permanent Representative of Romania
to the International Organizations in Vienna

IAEA General Conference, 53 Regular Session
Vienna, 14 – 18 September 2009

Mr. President,

Romania would like to join others in congratulating you on your election as President of the 53rd IAEA Regular Session of the General Conference. I assure you of our full support in accomplishing your important tasks.

I would like to use this opportunity for expressing Romania's deep appreciation for the entire activity of the IAEA Director General, Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, during his challenging mandates. We believe Dr. ElBaradei succeeded in addressing professionally and impartially the issues arising from a rapidly changing political and economical international environment.

At the same time, on behalf of Romania, I wish the next IAEA Director General, ambassador Yukiya Amano, a successful mandate on the way paved by his distinguished forerunner. I assure him of our constant support.

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to associate my country with the statement presented by Sweden on behalf of the European Union.

Romania welcomes the Member States that have recently joined the Agency, the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of Rwanda.

Mr. President,

Romania's policy in promoting nuclear energy peaceful applications, both power and non-power, as well as the national objectives in the framework of the Technical Cooperation Programme with the Agency, are in line with the European Union's objectives in the energy field.

The development of the nuclear field continues to be essential for my country. We consider that investments in secure and sustainable nuclear power capabilities represent a viable option. In accordance with the provisions of the National Energy Strategy, the contribution of the nuclear power generation to the national energy mix is continuously increasing.

Cernavoda Nuclear Power Plant (Units 1 and 2), which provide at present about 18% of electricity to the National Grid, will be extended with the completion of the next two CANDU-6 Units (Units 3 and 4) by the end of 2016, which are expected to supply 35 % of electricity need, thus reducing the dependence on fossil fuels for electricity generation.

In November 2008, the state owned company Nuclearelectrica SA and a group of six important international investors agreed to set-up a Project Company, ENERGONUCLEAR S.A., devoted to the completion, commissioning and operation of Cernavoda Nuclear Power Plant Units 3 and 4.

I would like to underline that Romania decided to further extend its National Nuclear Program. Under the coordination of the Ministry of Economy, the Site Selection Study for a new Nuclear Power Plant in Romania is underway. The new Nuclear Power Plant is expected to become operational by 2020.

Mr. President,

At present, the world is facing global economic and financial crisis. Nevertheless, the issues related to human health, tracing water resources and the environment remain important. Romania believes that nuclear science and technology can and should

contribute to the sustainable development in the Member States. We appreciate and support the Agency's efforts in this respect.

Romania has been constantly promoting nuclear applications and techniques in the field of medicine. The centres for early diagnosis and treatment of cancer based on the Positron Emission Tomography are to be extended soon in all the regions of the country.

In the area of non-power nuclear applications, the main Government's objectives are:

- implementation of new image analysis and processing systems with applications in medicine and in industry;
- diversification of nuclear research and development in the field of radioisotopes, irradiation techniques, advanced materials technologies for use in medicine, industry, agriculture, metrology, environmental protection, civil protection and research;
- integrating the national nuclear research infrastructure in the European Research Area Network; in accordance with the European Commission research development objectives.

Referring to the Emergency Preparedness and Response achievements since the last IAEA General Conference, I am pleased to announce that a National Centre for Management and Oversight of Intervention was officially commissioned in Bucharest. The Centre will coordinate and supervise the Response through the Information Management System for Emergency Situations. Among other competencies, the Centre will interact with all the Emergency Preparedness and Response Centres in the nuclear field in order to corroborate information, take decisions and coordinate the intervention at national level in case of nuclear emergency.

Mr. President,

As a reliable party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty since 1970 as a Non-Nuclear Weapons State, Romania is fully committed to the NPT and its three pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Romania's Additional Protocol in relation to the Safeguards agreements with IAEA came into force in 2000.

My country has been over the years an active promoter of Agency's activities concerning Nuclear Safety and Security. In our view, international cooperation and adherence to the relevant conventions in the field remain crucial for promoting the global nuclear safety framework.

At the same time, Romania would like to commend the Agency for the work in the Nuclear Security field and to express our continuous support.

Romania's attachment to combating nuclear threats is sustained by recent actions my Government undertook in the context of repatriating to the Russian Federation all high enriched spent nuclear fuel stored in Romania. This activity, carried-out under the umbrella of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI), has been completed in June 2009. The cooperation between the Governments of Romania, the US, the Russian Federation, along with relevant IAEA assistance, made this operation a success.

Against this background, it is important to underscore that Romania became the 14th country from which the high enriched spent nuclear fuel has been totally evacuated. This operation was the first commercial authorized spent nuclear fuel air shipment, demonstrating that the air shipment is an option to be considered when repatriating spent fuel.

Peace and security are permanently affected by the threat of terrorism which remains a key concern for the International Community today.

In order to prepare better for preventing nuclear terrorism, the Romanian authorities have decided to increase their involvement in the working groups organised under the auspices of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GI) and Global Nuclear Energy Partnership (GNEP).

Furthermore, in September 2008, relevant institutions from Romania (Romanian Border Police) and the US (U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration/NNSA) signed an Agreement aimed at coordinating efforts in order to prevent nuclear smuggling by installing modern radiation detection systems at multiple points of entry (PoEs). This initiative will provide the adequate framework to detect potential illicit nuclear and other radioactive material shipments.

We believe a key component in the global fight against of nuclear terrorism is the ability to detect illegal shipments of nuclear or radiological material and to rapidly share information on those events with other countries.

Mr. President,

As far as the international technical cooperation is concerned, Romania continues to be highly committed to developing peaceful nuclear technologies, under the comprehensive coordination of the IAEA. Furthermore, we stand ready to share with partners our expertise and experience.

According to the Country Program Framework, the medium term projects for the 2009-2011 TC Cycle are covering four main areas: Nuclear and Radiation Safety; Management of Radioactive Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel; Sustainability, Human Resources and Human Health.

Romania jointly organized with IAEA several international events on topics linked with the Country Program Framework priorities. These events provided the opportunity for experts to exchange knowledge on the selected topics concerning safety of nuclear reactors, safety assessment, decommissioning of nuclear facilities, planning of human resources, management of nuclear power plant lifetime.

Taking into consideration the estimated development of the nuclear power in the coming years, as stated in the Programme of the Romanian Government for 2009 – 2012, we consider that the next TC cycle should be drafted in order to reflect these changes. Romania will continue to place particular emphasis on activities devoted to sharing the knowledge at regional level through knowledge management networks and centres of excellence.

Romania continues to provide financial resources for the IAEA TC activities. I am pleased to inform you that Romania has already pledged its national voluntary contribution during this session of the General Conference, to support the Agency's TC projects.

In conclusion, Mr. President,

Romania strongly believes that the Agency must have the necessary resources to operate independently and to implement all its functions and tasks set out by the Member States.

It was a privilege to have been tasked by the Board of Governors to work for consensus over 2010-2011 IAEA Programme and Budget. I am convinced that the budget for 2010 constitutes a step forward in preparing the Agency for its future challenges.

Mr. President,

The task of the IAEA to facilitate international cooperation for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, to promote nuclear safety and security and nuclear verification remain more important than ever in today's world.

Thank you for your attention.