

**Mr. President,
Distinguished Director-General Grossi,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a distinct pleasure for me to join all of you for this Ministerial Conference.

On behalf of the Delegation of the Republic of Tajikistan, I would like to congratulate the President and Vice-Presidents of the Conference on their election and wish them the best of luck in their endeavors.

I would also like to express gratitude to the Director General and the IAEA staff for their professional commitment to working towards peaceful use of nuclear energy and ensuring non-proliferation.

Mr. President,

Since its joining of the IAEA in 2001, Tajikistan has been actively cooperating with the organization on all issues of common interest.

The IAEA has been supporting Tajikistan's efforts to enhance the capability of our oncology centers, which

contributes to the improving cancer care in our country. Thanks to the IAEA's expertise and resources, which are essential for the development of high-level standard oncological facilities, Tajik medical professionals are able to deliver world-class treatment to our citizens. We are confident that the new Rays of Hope initiative to help Member States, will contribute to our common goals in the fight against cancer.

The IAEA's ZODIAC Program has been instrumental in strengthening our capabilities to monitor and control zoonotic diseases. We have advanced our understanding and management of zoonotic diseases in established Zodiac National Laboratory (ZNL), ensuring a safer environmental for both our people and our livestock.

The other domain of our beneficial cooperation is the study aimed at reducing glacier-related risks. The support of the IAEA in this area, particularly the provided expertise has enhanced our specialist's knowledge to better address the challenges posed by glacier retreat and its negative impact on our water resources.

We are confident that the Agency's support of glacier-related risks will contribute to our common objectives identified in the 2025 International Year of Glaciers Preservation initiated by the President of the Republic of Tajikistan H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon, and adopted by the UN General Assembly Resolution in December 2022.

In 2025, Tajikistan will host the first High-Level International Conference dedicated to the International Year of Glaciers, and we expect more practical cooperation with the IAEA to contribute to the goals of this important international event.

We fully support the activities of the Agency and are determined to make our maximum contribution to their successful implementation.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

A key area of Tajikistan's cooperation with IAEA is disposal of abandoned uranium mining and processing sites with waste rock and tailing dumps in Tajikistan, which can affect the stability and security in our region.

Resolving the legacy of uranium mining and production in Central Asia is an important task of growing urgency. Without action, the release of radioactive and toxic waste into rivers in densely populated areas is inevitable. As radioactive pollution knows no borders it is imperative that the affected countries and the international community join forces and act before irreversible damage occurs.

The National Concept states that all radiation-contaminated objects in the waste sites require urgent remediation actions due to their harmful effects on public wellbeing and the environment, as well as the high potential for emergency incidents.

It is gratifying that these sites are incorporated in the Strategic Master Plan for Uranium Legacy Sites, also in its next phase, prepared under the leadership of the IAEA.

In its turn the Government of Tajikistan is developing and adopting the second state program for the period of 2025-2030 (the first ends at the end of 2024) to remediate territories affected by uranium mining.

We are very grateful to the IAEA (CGULS) staff for their assistance in drafting the program and hope for further cooperation and technical support from the IAEA to equip the laboratory of the Specialized Center for Radioactive Waste Management in accordance with the assessment of the IAEA mission in May of this year and post-remediation monitoring of restored sites.

Dear Colleagues,

The Republic of Tajikistan places paramount importance on maintaining a robust regulatory framework to ensure nuclear and radiation safety, security, and safeguards.

This commitment to effective regulation is critical to protecting public health and the environment while promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technologies. We continuously strengthen our capabilities in nuclear security, in collaboration with international partners such as the

IAEA, to prevent unauthorized access, theft, or misuse of nuclear and radioactive materials.

Furthermore, our regulatory authority plays a pivotal role in inspecting and overseeing remediation activities related to legacy uranium sites, ensuring that the processes align with international best practices and safety standards.

Regular monitoring and assessment of these remediation efforts are essential in mitigating the risks posed by radioactive contamination and ensuring the long-term safety of the environment and public health.

In addition, our regulatory body ensures that the implementation of safeguards agreements is fully compliant, further promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy and fulfilling our obligations under the non-proliferation regime.

A prominent development of our technical cooperation with IAEA is the inauguration of a new facility dedicated to the Scientific and Technical Support Organization (STSO) to the Regulatory Authority – the name of which is Regional CBRN Safety, Security and Safeguards Center by the president of Tajikistan H.E. Mr. Emomali Rahmon on 29th October 2024 in Dushanbe.

This landmark event is a testament to the high-level commitment of the Government to address the critical issues of nuclear and radiation safety, security, and safeguards.

The establishment of this regional facility will further enhance the regulatory authority's capacity to perform its essential duties, ensuring a more secure and safer environment for current and future generations not only for the Republic of Tajikistan but for Central Asia as a whole.

Tajikistan is also home to a Regional Training Facility for Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) Non-Proliferation and Export Control, which has significantly contributed to capacity building.

This facility plays a crucial role in building the capacity of our region by training more than 500 representatives annually from regulatory authorities, operators, law-enforcement agencies, military organizations, and other key stakeholders.

The training programs provided at this facility strengthen the region's ability to effectively prevent the proliferation of WMDs and improve coordination among stakeholders responsible for enforcing export controls and safeguarding security."

Excellencies,

At the end, I would like to highlight that, Tajikistan remains committed to its obligation to further strengthen

cooperation with IAEA in all aspects of regional and international engagements.

I thank you.