

**Statement delivered on behalf of the Euratom Community
by Mr Peter Faross,
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Mr President, Mr Director General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the European Commission, I welcome the role that the International Atomic Energy Agency is playing in nuclear safety and emergency preparedness and response. We particularly appreciate its commitment to effectively implement the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

We favour every effort to review the international nuclear safety framework in order to increase its effectiveness. We welcome the conclusions of the Second Extraordinary Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and look forward to the follow-up.

We also appreciate the Agency's role highlighted by the last Nuclear Security Summit.

I would now like to present recent developments in the nuclear field in the European Union and the cooperation between Euratom Community and the Agency.

1. Nuclear safety - EU stress-test process

Long before the Fukushima accident, ensuring and continuously improving nuclear safety had already been an overriding priority for the Commission. Immediately after the accident, the European Union

decided to reassess the level of nuclear safety and its governance in the EU and invited neighbouring countries to participate.

Risk and safety assessments – or "stress tests" – of nuclear power plants have been carried out along two convergent tracks:

- The Safety Track focused on assessing how nuclear installations can withstand the consequences of various unexpected events beyond design basis. It was carried out in full collaboration between the EU national regulators and the European Commission.
- The Security Track focused on analysing security threats and the prevention and response to incidents due to malevolent or terrorist acts. This assessment ran under a separate framework in the Council of the European Union.

This is the first time that an assessment of all EU nuclear power plants has been carried out simultaneously and based on a common methodology that had been developed and agreed by all the EU regulators and the European Commission.

In 2011, operators of all nuclear power plants in the EU and in two other participating countries – Switzerland and Ukraine – thoroughly assessed their installations. National regulators then verified these self-assessments and compiled national reports.

These national reports were subject to international peer reviews, which took place in the first half of this year. These reviews provide substantial added value to the whole process. Significant safety improvements have been identified in all participating countries.

The implementation of safety improvements is now the top priority. Last July, the European Nuclear Safety Regulators' Group set up an action plan, which provides a framework for this implementation.

The Commission's report to the Council is now scheduled for October 2012. It will contain the main findings of the stress tests with the Commission's views on the overall process, recommendations and follow-up actions.

The stress tests have demonstrated that nuclear safety is an area where cross-border cooperation and action at EU level bring tangible benefits. Concrete follow-up measures will represent an important contribution to nuclear safety in the EU.

2. Nuclear safety - EU legislative framework

After the Fukushima accident, the European Council also called on the Commission to review the EU nuclear safety framework and to propose any necessary improvements. The Commission presented its initial findings in the report to the European Council in December 2011 and in the beginning of this year ran a public consultation. The revision process will take full account of the stress tests results and of the input from the public consultation. The Commission intends to present its first proposals by the end of this year or early next year.

Legal provisions should further enhance the role and independence of national regulators, as well as improve transparency of regulatory decisions and operating practices. New EU legislation could also define common criteria for siting, design, construction and operation of nuclear power plants.

3. Emergency Preparedness and Response

In terms of emergency preparedness and response, EU Member States should consider expanding cross-border nuclear risk management plans to prepare better for an emergency and to coordinate their response actions.

The Commission is starting a study on the "Review of Current Off-Site Nuclear Emergency Preparedness and Response Arrangements in EU Member States and Neighbouring Countries". The objective of the study is to identify inconsistencies and gaps, and to develop proposals for improvements.

4. International nuclear safety cooperation

In the EU, we are convinced that nuclear safety is of paramount importance at the international and global level and we strive to promote it beyond our borders.

The Commission associated to its stress tests all neighbouring countries which operate or own nuclear installations or which have plans for the development of nuclear power. Switzerland and Ukraine have participated fully, whereas Armenia, Belarus, Croatia, Russia and Turkey have been associated to the stress-test process.

The EU cooperates also beyond its neighbourhood towards nuclear safety at global level. Under the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation, more than 500 million euros were allocated over the period 2007-2013 to the promotion of nuclear safety, radiation protection and the application of efficient and effective safeguards of nuclear material in third countries.

This instrument finances projects in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and Northern Africa. The EU Instrument for Pre-Accession has also financed similar activities in countries candidate to EU membership; more than 35 million euros were allocated over the same period to these countries, mainly to radiation protection.

5. Waste management

After the adoption of the Directive on the management of radioactive waste and spent fuel last year, the Commission's focus is on assisting Member States in drafting national waste and spent fuel management programmes. It is also monitoring the funding regimes in the Member States in view of properly applying the "polluter pays" principle and has prepared the Third report to the European Parliament and the Council on funding of decommissioning and waste management.

6. Basic safety standards

Last August, the European Commission endorsed the International Basic Safety Standards: Radiation Protection and Safety of Radiation Sources. Its decision was notified to the IAEA.

The Commission supports the publication of the revised International Basic Safety Standards as a co-sponsored document and will promote the implementation of these standards in the framework of external relations of the Euratom Community.

Since the adoption of the first Basic Safety Standards Directive more than fifty years ago, a significant body of EU legislation has been set up and it has been regularly updated. The Commission has undertaken to consolidate part of this legislation into one single act and its proposal is now under negotiation in the Council of the EU.

7. Nuclear safety - human resources

Maintaining the knowledge basis and building capacities on nuclear safety, nuclear security and radiation protection is a major challenge for existing nuclear power programs and particularly for expanding or new ones. The European Nuclear Safety Training and Tutoring

Institute, ENSTTI, is an initiative of the European Technical Safety Organizations Network (ETSON), which was welcomed by the EU.

Last year, the Commission for the first time reported on EU initiatives to improve staff education and training in the nuclear field. In December 2011, the European Human Resource Observatory in Nuclear Energy was officially launched. Its database is an important tool to monitor the supply and demand of human resources.

8. Cooperation with the IAEA

The cooperation between the International Atomic Energy Agency and the Euratom community is well on track.

8.1 Cooperation in Nuclear Safety

In nuclear safety, the Commission looks forward to the conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding concerning cooperation in the area of nuclear safety, whose proposal is being finalised.

The Commission cooperates closely with the IAEA on the implementation of nuclear safety projects in third countries and provides considerable support to the Technical Cooperation programmes and to the implementation of the IAEA's Action Plan. In this framework, we have also developed joint projects with the Agency.

The results of the EU stress test peer reviews are available and we encourage the IAEA to use them in the revision of their safety standards, planned as part of the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety.

The Commission welcomes the work performed by the IAEA in organising IRRS missions to EU Member States as foreseen by the EU Directive on Nuclear Safety. The Commission will further follow this

process, share the results and encourage all Member States with nuclear installations to consider inviting IRRS missions on a regular basis.

The recently adopted Nuclear Waste Directive requires comparable peer reviews of national waste management programmes and the Commission would welcome a similar service by the IAEA with an extended scope covering waste management.

The recent Extraordinary Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety confirmed the need to make the Convention more effective. The Commission fully supports the establishment of an "effectiveness and transparency" working group. Its task is to report to the next Review Meeting in 2014 on a list of actions to strengthen the CNS and to cooperate with other Contracting Parties.

8.2 Cooperation in Nuclear Safeguards

In the area of nuclear safeguards, the cooperation between the IAEA and the Commission continues to run smoothly and productively. Integrated Safeguards are fully implemented in the EU since January 2010.

This close cooperation is mutually beneficial and allows both organisations to draw their own independent conclusions. The IAEA's continued evolution of safeguards towards a State-level concept is welcomed by the Commission.

During the past year, the IAEA and the Commission have reflected upon ways in which the two inspectorates can further enhance their cooperation within the existing safeguards agreement, so as to enable the IAEA to make even better use of the Commission's verification activities. A proposal has been produced identifying strategic areas for enhanced collaboration which will be pursued by the two inspectorates over the coming year. This, we believe, will allow the

IAEA to further optimise the use of its resources in areas of higher proliferation risk.

The EU has continued to provide important technical support to the IAEA through the European Commission Cooperative Support Programme. The thirtieth anniversary of this programme was celebrated in Vienna in October 2011. Under this programme, the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission is actively collaborating with the IAEA with its scientific and technical work programme in nuclear safeguards.

Since 2010, the EU has committed more than 5 million euros from the Instrument for Stability to the international ECAS project which aims to enhance the capabilities of the IAEA Safeguards Analytical Services. These funds have been destined to pay for the construction and outfitting of the new IAEA Nuclear Material Laboratory in Seibersdorf.

8.3 Cooperation in Nuclear Security

The EU has enhanced its support to the IAEA, including the regard to promote Nuclear Security worldwide. The EU remains a key donor to the Nuclear Security Fund, with more than 30 million euros committed since 2004. The EU and the IAEA have closely coordinated their support to third countries in this field mainly through the border monitoring working group. This included the provision of detection equipment as well as training.

In addition, technical support is provided to the IAEA through numerous consultancies, development of technical guidance related to nuclear detection and forensics, contribution to IAEA training activities, development of training syllabus, developments of concepts such as "core capabilities in nuclear forensics", participation in the co-ordinated research program on detection and analysis of

seized samples. Currently, the EU is performing a project with IAEA which aims at improving the usability of the IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database.

I am also very pleased to mention the practical arrangement that we are about to sign with the IAEA on technical cooperation in the field of combating the illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive materials.

5. Conclusion

Mr President, Mr Director General, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In our globalised and interdependent world, we need common approaches in a number of domains, and nuclear safety is one of the most critical of these domains. This is true for those countries that have decided to keep or further develop nuclear electricity generation and those who consider introducing it. It is true for the countries that have decided to phase out nuclear power, because they will still need sound and safe approaches to decommissioning and management of spent fuel and waste. It is also true for all those countries that have never and will never use nuclear power, as they cannot be completely safe from the effects of any major nuclear accident or incident.

Nuclear safety and security are absolute priorities for the European Union. We must accept and assume our responsibility to develop and to implement an approach to nuclear safety that would transcend national borders and to create a common safety culture based on the highest achievable standards.

I hope that this conference will be another successful step towards achieving this ambitious but necessary goal.

Thank you for your attention.