

**Statement by the Delegation of Albania
at the 60th Session of the General Conference of the IAEA
as delivered by H.E. Mr. Ilir Beqaj
Minister of Health of the Republic of Albania**

Vienna, 26 September 2016

Mr. President,
Director General,
Ladies and gentlemen,

Albania aligned with the statement delivered by the European Union, but I would like to add some remarks in a national capacity.

Mr. President,

Allow me to join previous speakers in congratulating you for the election as President of the 60th Session of the General Conference. You can rely on the cooperation and support of the Albanian delegation in discharging your responsibilities.

Albania is proud to have been among the first group of states to sign and ratify the Agency's statute and to take part in the 1st General Conference in October 1957.

The 60th anniversary of the IAEA is an important milestone in the life of this organisation. It is only appropriate to take stock of the major achievements and contribution of the Agency to peace, prosperity and development.

As the 2015 Annual Report clearly indicates, the Agency has continued to address the many challenges it faces and to contribute to progress in all three major pillars under its statutory mandate in a balanced manner. We fully endorse this.

By making nuclear science and technology available to Member States, the IAEA makes a major contribution to development. The Agency is uniquely placed in assisting Member States to achieve a good number of the Sustainable Development Goals, adopted last year. We also appreciate that this year's Scientific Forum is devoted to "Nuclear Technology for the Sustainable Development Goals".

Albania notes with gratitude the specific, continuous and substantial contribution that the Agency has made through the years to a number of development sectors in my country. I wish to highlight, in particular, its important contribution to human health, the environment, agriculture and the strengthening of regulatory authorities.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Mother Teresa University Hospital in Tirana has now a new modern radiotherapy centre, which is also running a modern nuclear medicine service. This centre of excellence for the entire country would not have been possible without the Agency's contribution, the sustained commitment of the Albanian government and the dedication of the staff, trained also with the support of the Agency.

Albania has a robust Country Programme Framework with the Agency, which reflects our national priorities and needs, including the implementation of a comprehensive national cancer strategy. As a PACT demonstration site, Albania has benefited from the Technical Cooperation programme and is now ready to share its experience with other countries.

Mr. President,

We value the continuous support of the Agency to strengthen our national nuclear security regime and improve the radioactive monitoring capacities of the country. We have started on the implementation of the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan (INSSP). Standard Operating Procedures for customs services have been prepared, and an adequate regulatory framework, aligned with relevant international standards, is now in place.

My government also fully subscribes and is committed to strengthening international co-operation in the field of nuclear security. Between 16 and 27 May 2016, the Agency conducted the first International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission in Albania. We look forward to work with the Agency to address the Mission's findings.

Let me assure you again of Albania's deep appreciation for the continuous support that the Agency has offered towards strengthening the national nuclear security regime and improving the radioactive monitoring capacities of my country. We consider the upcoming International Conference on Nuclear Security as an important initiative towards strengthening nuclear security, and I am glad to confirm Albania's participation at ministerial level.

Mr. President,

The year from the 59th General Conference to date has been marked by significant achievements to the credit of the Agency. These were recognized in the statement of the European Union, with which Albania fully aligns. But let me touch briefly upon two of them at this 60th commemorative General Conference.

First, I wish to express our appreciation for the Agency's response to the outbreak of Zika. And second, I would like to commend the efforts of the Director General to improve the gender balance within the Agency.

Distinguished delegates,

Albania has been a regular contributor to the technical cooperation fund, paying its contributions towards the Regular Budget on time and in full, which we encourage all Member States to do. It is a pre-requisite for ensuring sustained and predictable resources for the Agency, to be used for the benefit of its Member States.

We are all aware of the challenges that lie ahead of us. Albania is convinced that we will be able to face them through enhanced and strengthened cooperation and support from the Agency.

I would like to conclude by reiterating again my delegation's full support to you, Mr. President, in steering this anniversary General Conference to a successful conclusion.

Thank you.