

**Statement by Rokas Baliukovas, Vice-minister of Energy  
of the Republic of Lithuania, at the 60<sup>th</sup> Session of the  
General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

Mr. President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, allow me to congratulate you Mr. President, on the election as the President of the 60th General Conference. Lithuania would like to congratulate the Agency on its 60th anniversary, to thank the IAEA Director General and the Secretariat for their professional and hard work, and to assure them of the Lithuanian support.

Lithuania would like warmly welcome the applications for membership of Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and the Islamic Republic of Gambia.

Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement made by Slovakia on behalf of the European Union. In my national capacity, I would like to add the following.

**Nuclear Safety**

This year we commemorate the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the nuclear accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant (NPP) and the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Fukushima Daiichi accident. These were the most severe disasters in the history of nuclear power. The world has to learn at least three fundamental lessons from these two accidents. One may argue they are well known. However, I find it particularly important to highlight them here. Firstly, any country that develops nuclear power must strictly implement the international nuclear and environmental safety requirements and standard. The newcomer countries must be especially determined to follow the rules and good practices that more experienced countries foster. International nuclear safety regime is a living set of documents that must respond *inter alia* to the most recent developments in nuclear technologies, challenges caused by climate change (extreme draughts and storms), and emerging new threats, such as terrorism. Lithuania highly appreciates the role that the IAEA and the European nuclear safety institutions play in promoting the international nuclear safety standards among their member states, as well as globally. It is the only way to develop the nuclear power in harmony with the human well-being.

Secondly, the accident in Chernobyl NPP demonstrated, in the most ruthless way, that nuclear accidents and radiological emergencies have no boundaries. Therefore, the development of a nuclear power program cannot be considered as the undertaking that solely concerns the country of origin. The international community and especially the neighbouring countries have a part to play in the matter. In this regard the 4<sup>th</sup> principle of the IAEA's safety fundamentals is especially important. If the risks to which a nuclear facility gives rise outweighs the benefits, the nuclear facility cannot be considered justified.

And finally, any nuclear facility must be constructed, operated and decommissioned in the environment of openness and transparency. The government that bears the exclusive responsibility for the safety and security of the nuclear facility in its territory, must assume its obligations to its own public as well as to the neighbours and international community

Each country has the right to develop nuclear power, but international obligations on nuclear safety must be duly addressed and national decisions must be seen in a broader context of possible transboundary implications.

### **Nuclear Security**

Mr. President,

Unwavering international nuclear security is essential in eliminating difficult challenges posed by the threat of terrorism involving weapons of mass destruction. We are hopeful the upcoming second International Conference on Nuclear Security in Vienna will contribute to productive international efforts in this stance. Lithuania remains committed to add meaningfully to these efforts.

Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process – with the pinnacle Summit held Washington this year – marked a tremendous advance in international efforts and a formidable achievement of states in strengthening nuclear security. Lithuania is delighted to have contributed to the NSS process over the years and will remain

strongly supportive of its main objectives and continuity. We are committed to contributions to the joint statements of five NSS gift basket initiatives.

Lithuania continues to put efforts to build and to strengthen its capabilities to address the threats of illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials and other non-state actors' activities involving these materials. The ultimate goals of the Lithuanian Nuclear Security Centre of Excellence (NSCOE) are to build capabilities of respective agencies personnel to detect and effectively response to the nuclear security event, as well as to enhance multiagency cooperation and coordination while addressing the nuclear security event. The NSCOE in cooperation with foreign partners runs regional cooperation projects aimed at capacity building support to countries in the region. The NSCOE has been a member of the IAEA Nuclear Security Support Centres Network and takes part in the number of projects with the network.

Sustainable nuclear security also calls for national commitments to adhere to the international instruments. Alongside the IAEA community, we welcome the official entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) in 2016. The CPPNM is a fundamental international undertaking in the area of physical protection of nuclear material, hence adoption of the Amendment is one of the most important steps in strengthening nuclear security globally.

### **Nuclear Non-Proliferation**

Lithuania's commitment to non-proliferation efforts is long standing and we remain fully devoted to the IAEA verification and safeguards system. Lithuania supports the continued efforts to strengthen the effectiveness of the Agency's safeguards system through the development and application of the State-level concept.

### **Nuclear Energy**

Mr. President,

Lithuania express its strong commitment to develop nuclear power in the most responsible way, maintaining nuclear safety at the centre of our political and technical attention.

Decommissioning activities in Ignalina NPP , are performed according to projects and programs agreed upon with the Nuclear Regulatory Authority. All the necessary technical and management measures to assure adequate level of safety of decommissioning activities are undertaken. Lithuania has actively participated in the stress tests that have been carried out on all the facilities having nuclear fuel in European Union, Switzerland and Ukraine. Safety improvement measures resulting from stress tests for the existing facilities in Lithuania were implemented by the end of 2015.

IAEA Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) Mission was successfully conducted as planned in April 2016 to assess Lithuania's legal and governmental framework and regulatory infrastructure for nuclear and radiation safety. IAEA team of experts expressed an opinion that Lithuania's institutions involved in nuclear and radiation safety regulation are committed to provide effective oversight.

Over the recent period significant progress in the spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste management in Lithuania has been marked by the incorporation of the requirements of the EU directive Euratom 2011/70 into the Lithuanian national legislation. The National Radioactive Waste Development Program, which envisages key development guidelines for the radioactive waste management in the country and provides milestones for their implementation was approved.

### **Technical Cooperation**

Lithuania highly values the technical cooperation programme of the IAEA, and its role in building, strengthening and maintaining capacities in safe, peaceful and secure use of nuclear technologies and at the same time contributing to the implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). We are grateful to the IAEA for close cooperation on the Visaginas NPP project implementation, for provided possibility to Lithuanian institutions to strengthen the competence in various

areas of nuclear safety and security, radiation protection and management of radioactive waste and we sincerely thank the IAEA for its comprehensive, competent and continuous support.

Finally, Mr. President,

Lithuania believes that nuclear technologies need intensive international collaboration and oversight, because nuclear accidents and radiological emergencies have no boundaries. Each country has the right to develop nuclear energy and on the same time has responsibility to do it safely and securely. Lithuania strongly supports global efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security. In this context Lithuania would like to assure you of its continuing strong support for the activities of the Agency.

I thank you, Mr. President

