

STATEMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
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MINISTER OF ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES

INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY  
60TH GENERAL CONFERENCE  
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Mr. President,

Allow me to begin by congratulating you on your assumption of the Presidency of the 60th Session of the IAEA General Conference and the members of the General Committee on their election.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to the new members of the Agency.

This year marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the IAEA. This is not a mere symbolic milestone, but a testament to the ongoing importance of the Agency's mission. For six decades since its founding, the IAEA has worked tirelessly to carry out its mandate towards the objective of extending the benefits of peaceful nuclear technology to mankind and prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. It has coped with many challenges, all the while accumulating unmatched experience and substantial expertise Member States can rely on.

The world in which the IAEA operates has changed exponentially. Yet, its mission has far from diminished in relevance. It has successfully adapted to the changing circumstances and the emerging needs of the member states. Today, it occupies a central role in international nuclear cooperation, and it contributes to global development and non-proliferation more than ever.

Turkey is pleased to observe that the IAEA remains up to the task. We must ensure that the IAEA has the necessary political, technical and financial support to effectively carry out its mandate.

Mr. President,

2016 has seen significant developments in international efforts to address threats and challenges to nuclear security.

The Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) held last April in Washington presented a timely opportunity for an international response to nuclear security challenges. It has achieved new commitments that will improve the nuclear risk outlook in coming years. Turkey welcomes the Summit Communiqué, which reaffirms the central role of the IAEA in strengthening global nuclear security cooperation.

2016 bore witness to another important milestone in global efforts to strengthen the security of nuclear materials and nuclear facilities in the civilian nuclear fuel cycle. The 2005 Amendment to the CPPNM finally entered into force last May. The amended CPPNM presents a stronger legal framework, on the basis of which the risks of nuclear terrorism, smuggling and illicit trafficking in nuclear materials can more effectively be countered. We commend the Agency's role in ensuring the entry into force of the Amendment.

While the responsibility for nuclear security lies with the state, nuclear threats and consequences of nuclear terrorism transcend international borders. On the other side, in today's world, regional threats quickly evolve into a global phenomenon. Even though every country take precautions related to their own power plants; we cannot ignore security risks that go beyond our borders.

Therefore, we should have a broader security perspective that is not limited to legislative frameworks. We must take decisive action against possible threats cooperatively and every country should put its best effort.

Accordingly, Turkey has shown strong commitment to the enhancement of nuclear security, both at home as a national responsibility and also in joining in international efforts for effective nuclear security worldwide.

Turkey has been involved in the NSS process from its inception, and presented its instrument of ratification of the Amendment of the CPPNM to IAEA last year. Already before the ratification of the Amendment, our relevant national regulation

had been revised by taking into account its provisions. Furthermore, International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) is also in force in Turkey. Work is underway to update provisions of the Turkish Penal Code in accordance with our international obligations.

Upgrading Turkey's legislative framework to the highest international standards and enhancing its implementation capacity is a constant process. In its efforts, Turkey enjoys IAEA's assistance.

More work is still needed to build an effective global nuclear security system in order to secure all weapons-usable nuclear material. High-level political attention on nuclear security must be preserved. As such, Turkey is looking forward to the upcoming International Conference on Nuclear Security to be hosted by IAEA in Vienna in December. We firmly believe that, the Conference will help to maintain political momentum and raise awareness of nuclear security among all stakeholders.

Mr. President,

Turkey is resolutely committed to the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons and to ensuring safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear energy. Nuclear non-proliferation, as well as achieving irreversible and verifiable nuclear disarmament are prerequisites to attain this goal.

In this regard, Turkey reaffirms the vital importance of the NPT. The only legally binding multilateral commitment to nuclear disarmament, it must be ensured that the NPT remains so, in the rapidly changing international environment.

The result of 2015 Review Conference was disheartening. Yet, 2010 Action Plan is in place. We must re-establish a common vision before new review cycle begins.

Mr. President,

The IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and its Additional Protocol are the essential tools establishing a solid verification standard. As such, Turkey welcomes that the number of States with Additional Protocols has reached 127. Turkey calls on

those states that have not yet done so, to sign, ratify and implement their Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and Additional Protocol without further delay.

Turkey has concluded both a CSA and Additional Protocol with the IAEA. The Broader Conclusion obtained from the Agency in 2012, confirming that all nuclear materials in Turkey have remained in peaceful activities, proves the high standards that Turkey's system of accounting and control of nuclear material has reached.

Mr. President,

At the beginning of this year, the long-awaited Implementation Day of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding Iran's nuclear programme was announced. It is glad to see that Turkey's Initiative called Istanbul Agreement has concluded with great success. Turkey expects uninterrupted and full implementation of Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, on the basis of complete transparency.

On the issue of implementation of safeguards agreement in Syria, Turkey takes note of the Director General's recent report to the Board of Governors and trusts that continued engagement of Syria would help the Agency in the eventual closure of this case.

Honorable guests, Dear participants,

We are all aware of the fact that Today's Syria is more fragile than ever, which impacts quite negatively on safeguard implementation. In this regard, It should be ensured that Syria sign the safeguard agreement additional protocol and open its territory for inspection and monitoring of International Atomic Energy Agency. This is of great importance in a country such as Syria that continue to use chemical weapons on its citizens.

At the same time, Turkey supports the establishment of nuclear-weapons-free-zones, wherever feasible and on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at among States of the regions concerned. The failure of the convening of a Middle East nuclear-

weapons-free-zones Conference in 2012 is a major disappointment. We call on all parties to come to an agreement on the way forward.

Turkey supports the policy that every each country in Middle East region should sign the safeguard agreement in order to reach nuclear free zone.

Mr. President,

2015 was a significant year for nuclear safety. Convention of Nuclear Safety (CNS) Diplomatic Conference was held which resulted in the Vienna Declaration; the IAEA report on the Fukushima accident was published and the final report on the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety was delivered. As a result, the Agency's work to foster a stronger safety culture now has updated tools at its disposal.

Turkey commends the Secretariat's plans to build on these assets by applying a methodology for systematic analysis of observations and lessons in order to identify priority safety aspects. Turkey believes that, a comprehensive approach towards strengthening nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety should be adopted.

The safety of aged nuclear power plants remains to be of particular concern to Turkey. We call on the relevant Member States to review and enhance the safety of such nuclear power plants in line with the updated IAEA safety standards as early as possible or to shutdown such NPPs.

In particular, safety of old nuclear power plants needs to be thoroughly examined. In this respect, 47 year old Metzamor Nuclear Power Plant, located in an earthquake prone zone in Armenia, 16 km away from our border, which lacks protective structures remains to be a concern for Turkey and other neighbours of Armenia. We again strongly underline that all necessary measures must be taken to eliminate the risks associated with this NPP.

In accordance with article 6 of convention of nuclear safety, it clearly envisages that current operating Nuclear Power Plants containing safety risks should be strengthened by focusing safety aspect.

Although energy supply security is one of the prior goals for the countries, nuclear safety should always come first. Nuclear Risk and safety is such a phenomenon that cannot be remained local. In this respect, Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant should be shut down. The region and the World cannot afford another Nuclear Accident after Chernobyl disaster.

Mr. President,

Turkey is determined to carry on its nuclear energy projects in order to increase and diversify its energy supplies. To this end, Turkey has signed agreements with countries which possess vast expertise in the field.

Currently, three NPP projects, each consisting of four reactor units are in various stages. The most advanced one is the Akkuyu NPP project, signed Intergovernmental Agreement with Russian Federation in 2010. Sinop NPP project, signed Intergovernmental Agreement with Japanese Government in 2013, is at the feasibility stage and a third one is at site selection stage.

Turkey arduously takes all necessary precautions in generating nuclear power safely. Bilateral cooperation to improve nuclear safety, figures seriously in our intergovernmental cooperation agreements for NPP projects. To this end, state-of-the-art technologies are envisioned.

Accordingly, Turkey follows the IAEA's Safety Standards and guidance, as well as drawing on main international mechanisms, such as the CNS. In this regard, we are looking forward to the 7th Review Meeting of CNS in 2017. The Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management is on our national agenda and expected to be ratified by the Turkish Parliament soon.

Additionally, Turkish Atomic Energy Agency (TAEK), has signed bilateral cooperation agreements with its Russian, Ukrainian, Finnish, US, French and Japanese counterparts. A cooperation agreement in the field of nuclear safety between

Turkey and China was signed earlier this month during the visit of our President to China.

Turkey maintains close dialogue with the IAEA on the development of its nuclear power infrastructure. We are benefiting from IAEA's review and advisory services on the basis of Turkey's requirements and we are highly appreciative of the Agency's invaluable assistance. In recent years, we hosted several IAEA review missions in this field.

Mr. President,

Turkey is continuously enhancing its national infrastructure, human resources and knowledge capacity. Efforts to update laws and regulations are ongoing, including those related to the use of nuclear energy and radiation applications. This work takes into account the latest IAEA safety standards and international best practices, as well as EU Directives.

Mr. President,

Turkey attributes great importance to the technical cooperation programme of the Agency and tries to take advantage of it as extensively as possible. The Support and assistance of the IAEA in challenging areas such as establishing the appropriate legal and regulatory framework, site selection for NPPs and developing radioactive waste management policies and strategies are invaluable for embarking countries like Turkey. We expect that the Agency will give continued priority to those Member States developing or implementing a nuclear power programme.

Thank you Mr. President.