

# **62<sup>nd</sup> General Conference of the IAEA**

## **Statement**

### **The Republic of Latvia**

**Mr. Rinalds Muciņš, State Secretary on the Ministry of Environmental  
Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia,**

**Vienna, Austria, 17-21 September 2018**

Mr President,

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Latvia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I would like to make the following remarks in a national capacity.

Mr. President,

I am pleased to join others in congratulating you on the election as the President of the 62<sup>nd</sup> General Conference and look forward to work under your guidance. Equally, Latvia would like to express its gratitude to the Agency's Secretariat for its professionalism and commend Director General Amano for his skilful leadership and dedication to the work of the Agency.

Mr. President,

I would like to draw attention to some issues, which are of particular importance to my country.

## ***Nuclear non-proliferation***

I would like to emphasize the importance of Agency's safeguards system in the implementation of non-proliferation obligations under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, especially under its third pillar of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In the light of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this fundamental Treaty, we call for all the states that have not yet done so, to join and to adhere to its terms. The Treaty is the cornerstone and golden standard of the non-proliferation, arms control and disarmament regime.

A strong rules-based international order is of paramount importance to tackle proliferation and other transnational security challenges. In order to contribute to this effort, Latvia assumed the Chairmanship of the Nuclear Suppliers Group this year. The Group fosters non-proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation of guidelines for nuclear exports and nuclear-related exports.

Latvia strongly supports strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the Agency's safeguards. I would like to highlight the importance of the Agency's comprehensive and highly professional work on the monitoring and verification activities in Iran. Latvia recognizes the crucial role of Agency's ongoing efforts to report on safeguards issues, in accordance with its mandate and the provisions of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Latvia strongly supports finding a peaceful and diplomatic solution for the situation in the Korean Peninsula. To achieve that, we need to maintain international pressure on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea until there is real and verifiable progress toward nuclear disarmament. Latvia fully supports the restrictive measures imposed on North Korea by the United Nations and the European Union and has applied national sanctions. In this regard, we welcome

Agency's readiness to address the situation in the Korean Peninsula and nuclear disarmament of North Korea in accordance with its mandate.

### ***Nuclear safety and security***

We have consistently stressed the necessity to comply with the highest safety standards and nuclear security guidance. Application of new technologies is crucial for the advancement of many fields, but nuclear safety and security must be ensured. Agency's assistance to the Member States in this endeavor should be especially emphasized.

Similarly, international agreements and standards set the right conditions for the construction of Nuclear Power Plants. Safe construction, use and maintenance of nuclear facilities can have a broad impact on regional and global security. Latvia highlights the importance of stress tests and values the significance of principles proposed in the 2015 Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety regarding the safety assessment for existing nuclear power plants.

We continue to underline that the foundation for ensuring nuclear safety globally is transparency, international cooperation and an efficient information exchange among neighbouring countries.

### **Technical Cooperation**

Latvia highly values Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme and its role in building, strengthening and maintaining capacities in safe, peaceful and secure use of nuclear technologies.

The opportunities offered by the Agency's technical cooperation program are much appreciated in Latvia. In the new technical cooperation cycle of 2020-2021 Latvia plans to strengthen radiation safety culture in the medical field and maintain continuous professional improvement of regulatory staff. Latvia will

also strengthen the Competence in Radiation Technologies and Safety for Biomedicine and Material Science.

I would like to underline that Latvia attaches great importance to continued collaboration with the Technical Cooperation Department and the ongoing exchange of best practices with international experts on radiation security and nuclear safety. This year we have hosted one regional training course for nutrition and health specialists in Eastern and Southern Europe about the management of quantitative data.

I am sure that the stable isotope technique to assess body composition will popularize the use of nuclear techniques in this field. It is an important step toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, because it aims to reduce non-communicable diseases related to pre-mature mortality and end all forms of malnutrition.

Latvia commends the Agency for their invaluable support to Member States, particularly its guidance on adjusting regulatory frameworks to ensure the highest standards of safety, security and safeguards.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me reiterate the importance of the Agency, as the forerunner in promoting peaceful uses of nuclear technology and its central role in strengthening global nuclear safety and security. Agency's guidance regarding safeguards, as well as the work on promotion of non-proliferation is a true testament to the effectiveness of international cooperation and dialogue. Without doubt, this is the best approach when it comes to solving the complex issues of international peace and security.

Thank you!