

## As prepared for delivery

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Opening Remarks for the GC64 Virtual Side Event

### SENIOR SAFETY AND SECURITY REGULATORS' MEETING

Thursday, 24 September 2020

13:00-16.30

*Madam Chair Dana Drábová, ladies and gentlemen, good morning, afternoon and evening!*

Welcome to this virtual meeting of the SRM and to all who are here today for your participation despite the challenges we all continue to face during this unprecedented COVID-19 period. This is the first pandemic of this size to hit those countries with nuclear operations simultaneously which has had global implications and impacted a number of areas.

Some of these include governments' policy decisions on transportation which in turn has delayed and affected the supply chain for sensitive isotopes. Other challenges include human resource matters as well as non-essential businesses shutting down which also hamper the supply chain and has impacted the global economy. In short, Covid-19 has resulted in worldwide implications that include for the nuclear industry.

*Madam Chair, Ladies and gentlemen,*

The nuclear industry has always learned and improved and was fairly well prepared for this pandemic- which as we all know is considered an external event. With the Covid-19 unfolding situation, many pre-determined pandemic plans were already in place. In this context, it is important to note that past events have shaped legal instruments and improved resilience. The Agency set in place, enhancing its ways of working under the 'new normal conditions' that

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includes proactive efforts to facilitate information exchanged, increased measures to share experiences and offer appropriate support.

During the past few months, we have had to also address the scheduling of Convention meetings that included hosting virtual meeting such as the 10th meeting of early notification competent authorities that took place from 15 to 19 June.

However, some meetings face postponement which include the 8th review meeting of CNS which is postponed to March next year (15 to 26 March 2021), and the 7th review cycle of JC, with 4th extraordinary meeting which is planned from 24 May to 4 June 2021.

The good news as of now is that the A/CPPNM conference in 2021 remains on schedule.

*Madam Chair, Ladies and gentlemen,*

Covid-19 is a shared global concern and there are issues to be addressed.

Operating organizations and regulatory bodies have been implemented actions; but, supply chain are expected to be affected into the future and this can also impact the nuclear energy supply. We need to focus on the present unfolding situation and the way forward.

As mentioned, the Agency continues its activities to meet the set objectives but due to this unprecedented situation, some of our activities are postponed to next year. Long term impact is expected to be minimal and the significant reporting from our Member States has been very helpful in assessing problems faced and solutions implemented. Reports gathered through existing and new mechanisms and surveys also used to gather information

*Madam Chair, Ladies and gentlemen,*

To assess and examine the impact of lessons learned, the Agency will continue to collaborate with its Member States and joint reports are foreseen.

I would like to draw attention to a publication synthesising Member States actions that is in the pipeline and will aid in identifying needs, if any, to update safety standards and security guidance.

I would also like to inform you all that INSAG is continuing its efforts to reflect on Covid-19 situation. More details can be found in GC(64)/INF/6 — a report

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by the IAEA Director General regarding to the Performance of Nuclear and Radiological Facilities and Activities during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Thank you and I wish the meeting success.