

GREECE

Statement by Ambassador Catherine Koika

Resident Representative of Greece to the IAEA

64th General Conference of the IAEA, Vienna, September 21-25, 2020

Mr. President,

Allow me to congratulate you on your election as President of this 64th General Conference and to assure you of our full support.

Greece fully aligns itself with the EU statement delivered by Germany, the current EU Presidency and would like to make some additional remarks in its national capacity.

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to praise Director General Grossi and the Secretariat for the prompt and quick initiatives undertaken in order to ensure the uninterrupted and proper function of the Agency's activities despite the impact of the COVID-19 worldwide, including the travel arrangements. I would also like to commend the Agency's response to the needs and requests for assistance by member-states in combating the pandemic, by the provision of detection equipment, guidance and training to over 120 countries.

Greece fervently supports the IAEA's pivotal role in the fields of non-proliferation, safeguards implementation, nuclear safety, nuclear security, technical cooperation and nuclear applications.

We reiterate our support to the NPT as the cornerstone of non proliferation and disarmament regime and we urge all States that have not yet joined the Treaty , to do so without further delay as non-nuclear weapon States. In this vein, we highlight the IAEA safeguards which constitute an important instrument in the implementation of the NPT.

We would also like to reiterate our firm and full support for the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East and encourage all parties to reinvigorate their efforts in attaining this goal.

Greece fully supports the JCPOA as a multilateral achievement of paramount importance for the regional, European and international security and the non proliferation regime. The upholding and preservation of the JCPOA is crucial in order to provide the international community with the

necessary assurances on the exclusively peaceful nature of Iran's nuclear Programme. In this context, we urge all countries to refrain from taking actions that impede the implementation of the JCPOA and we call on Iran to return to full implementation of its JCPOA commitments. We fully support the IAEA in its long-term mission of monitoring and verifying Iran's nuclear Programme and we welcome the Director General's updates and the positive developments on the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol in Iran.

Greece supports the Agency's efforts to further develop and successfully implement the State Level Approaches in States under integrated safeguards and welcomes the DG's periodic reporting on this matter.

Mr. President,

Although nuclear power option is not part of our national energy mix, we note that there is a continued increase in the use of nuclear energy and an expansion of related sensitive technologies and materials in our broader region.

Therefore, Greece firmly believes that the IAEA has a vital role in strengthening member-states' capacity to ensure that the development and use of nuclear energy take place under the most rigorous safety and security conditions.

For Greece, stringent implementation of IAEA's safety standards and nuclear security guidance documents are of utmost importance. In this respect, we encourage all countries to request peer review missions relevant to their programme, implement follow-up recommendations and, in the spirit of transparency, publish the reports of these missions.

We welcome the DG's commitment in promoting gender balance and we commend his initiative on the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme which, we are confident that it will contribute to the emergence of a new generation of female leaders in nuclear sciences and technologies.

We also note with great interest the ZODIAC initiative by the Director General aiming at establishing a global framework for the timely detection of zoonotic diseases and the prevention of their outbreak. We hope that this ambitious project will be carried out in full cooperation with other relevant organizations such as - inter alia- the WHO and the FAO.

Greece fully supports the Agency's work on nuclear science, technology and applications which underpins the inalienable right of all state parties to the NPT to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. In this context, we praise the Agency's work in cancer control especially in developing countries, in

cooperation with other international organizations such as the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) and we commend the initiatives undertaken to expand comprehensive cancer care for women affected by cervical cancer.

Mr. President,

At this point, I would like to refer to the main national activities transpired since the last General Conference.

Greece through the Greek Atomic Energy Commission (EEAE) continued to cooperate closely with the IAEA in a plethora of areas. Indicatively:

A. Greece participated in cooperation and collaboration initiatives which enhance national authorities' capability to ensure the effective regulatory control of the transport of radioactive material in the Mediterranean region and in Europe. In this framework, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission co-organized with the IAEA the Interregional Training Course on Inspections for Transport of Radioactive Material (2-6 December 2019).

Furthermore, Greek experts have been assisting other member states in drafting radiation safety regulations and establishing national policies and strategies for Education and Training (E&T) in Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety

Greece has also hosted 3 IAEA meetings with the participation of 49 scientists. Additionally, 7 fellows were hosted in national laboratories for on-the-job-training or scientific visits in the fields of radiation safety and security while 35 Greek scientists participated to various events (meetings, conferences, workshops, etc.) organized by the IAEA last year.

B. Taking into account the special working conditions during the COVID-19 lockdown, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission implemented teleworking for its staff, following security protocols and using virtual private networks. It prioritized the authorization of diagnostic medical practices and successfully adapted its operational response to the pandemic challenges in the field of individual monitoring, which was presented as a good practice to a special webinar organized by IAEA.

Within a pilot context, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission, conducted remote inspections to facilities implementing practices with radiation sources and adapted its training activities to the new conditions by launching on-line training.

Following the lockdown period, the Greek Atomic Energy Commission conducted a survey which revealed that the problems arisen with the

implementation of practices using ionizing radiation were very limited and that the response of the Greek Atomic Energy Commission, during this unprecedented period, was well appreciated.

C. Last but not least, Greece has incorporated to its national legislation the necessary regulations for radiation protection and has issued several Ministerial Decisions in order to achieve full compliance of the Greek legislation with the related European Directives on radiation safety principles, existing exposure situation strategies etc.

EEAE has also submitted the Greek National Report under the Convention on Nuclear Safety to the IAEA and the Report of Greece on the implementation of Council Directive 2009/71/Euratom, as amended by the Council Directive 2014/87/ Euratom, to the European Commission.

To conclude, Mr. President,

The Greek Government would like to reiterate its strong support to the important mission and relevant projects of the IAEA, in particular during these difficult times of COVID-19, and to express Greece's commitment to continue its fruitful cooperation with the Agency.

Thank you.