

64th General Conference of the IAEA Statement

The Republic of Latvia

**Mr. Edvīns Balševics, State Secretary of the Ministry of Environmental
Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia,**

21-25 September 2020

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The Republic of Latvia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union and would like to add a few points in a national capacity.

I would like to emphasize the Agency's wide-reaching spheres of work, beginning with its safeguards system in regards to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. As we express our continued support for the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and voice our concern about Iran's reduced commitments, we must remember that the continued verifying and reporting activities carried out by IAEA in this regard are of the utmost importance. The recent announcement by Iran to allow inspectors access to two previously prohibited sites is an example of the trust the Agency enjoys. Latvia also calls on the DPRK¹ to move toward a complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation as the continuation of its nuclear programme is a clear violation of relevant UN Security Council resolutions. We appreciate the clear role of the Agency in verifying the nuclear disarmament of the DPRK.

Furthermore, Latvia highly values the important role of the Agency in strengthening global nuclear safety and security.

¹ Democratic People's Republic of Korea

In this regard, Latvia deems it important that the Agency provides an expert evaluation to assess the progress made by the Republic of Belarus in implementing the safety related measures identified in previous expert missions. It is important to have international expert evaluation with a clear statement on whether the Ostrovec NPP is considered safe for commissioning. This is an issue important for the safety and security of Latvia and its inhabitants, as well as for neighbouring countries.

Compliance with the highest safety standards and nuclear security guidance is important. The application of new technologies is crucial for the advancement of many fields and the Agency's assistance to the Member States is crucial.

Latvia places great importance to improving nuclear safety. In 2019 Latvia hosted IAEA's Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) Mission and Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management, Decommissioning and Remediation (ARTEMIS) Mission. The results of the Missions are a great support in improving our regulatory infrastructure, radiation and nuclear safety.

On a more practical note,

Latvia commends the IAEA Technical Cooperation Department for its invaluable support to Member States, particularly its guidance on adjusting regulatory frameworks.

Special thanks to the IAEA and donor countries during this difficult period for the opportunity to receive additional equipment for COVID-19 analyzes within the framework of the IAEA interregional project, which will increase Latvia's COVID-19 testing capacity.

We are grateful to the IAEA for providing Latvia's institutions the possibility to strengthen our competence in various areas.

Thank you!