

**General Statement of the Republic of Croatia at the
65th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency
Vienna, 22 September 2021**

Delivered by the Head of Delegation, Ambassador and Permanent Representative, Mr. Mario HORVATIĆ (please check against delivery)

Mr. President,

At the outset, let me extend my congratulations to my dear colleague, Permanent Representative of Kuwait, H.E. Sadiq Marafi on the election for the President of the 65th General Conference, as well as to all Vice-Presidents. I assure you of my country's full support in our work at this General Conference.

The Republic of Croatia, as an EU Member State, aligns itself fully with the statement made earlier by Slovenia on behalf of the EU. Additionally, allow me to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Let me first express our thanks to the International Atomic Energy Agency and Director General Grossi for ensuring the continuity of its activities during these globally challenging times. I would also like to highlight the exceptional efforts the Agency put into the design and implementation of virtual education, that enable a wide availability of expertise involving a large number of participants. This will further enhance national capacities and expand the pool of experts in the area of radiological and nuclear safety.

We also applaud the Agency's response during the COVID-19 pandemics and highly appreciate the support extended to its Member States. The provided virus detection and diagnostic equipment proved a very important asset for controlling the pandemics.

Croatia strongly supports the common goals relating to the cooperation of the IAEA with all Member States, involving the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, safe use of nuclear material and technology, as well as sustainable development.

In the light of climate change, the effects of which we experience on a daily basis, sustainable development, as a balance between economic and social factors, is becoming an indispensable factor in national strategies.

In addition to the aforesaid, the continuation of good cooperation with the Agency has given us the opportunity to adopt and participate in the application and implementation of international standards by improving nuclear safety in the Croatia and the surrounding area.

Mr. President,

Allow me to mention the following important national activities in 2020:

Croatia works intensively on improving the national regulatory framework in the field of radiological and nuclear safety through the implementation of international commitments and in accordance with the recommendations of the Integrated Regulatory Review Service.

In that regard, let me highlight the adopted Country Programme Framework 2020-2025, which identifies the following five priority areas for technical cooperation with the IAEA:

1. Radiological and nuclear safety and security;
2. Food and agriculture;
3. Health;
4. Water and environment;
5. Energy and industry

Currently, three national projects are being carried out and Croatian experts participate in several regional projects in accordance with the priorities of the Country Programme Framework.

Croatia is particularly committed to a continuing and successful cooperation with our neighbours Slovenia and Hungary regarding the timely exchange of information in the event of a radiological emergency.

In conclusion, we highly appreciate that the Agency is enabling us access to good practices, as well as networking with experts who share their knowledge and experience in this globally useful community.

The Republic of Croatia is looking forward to share and use this knowledge and experience in the future and will continue to support the work and further development of IAEA capacities.

Thank you kindly for your attention.