



**G R E E C E**

**IAEA General Conference**

**20-24 September 2021**

**Statement by H.E. Mrs Catherine Koika, Ambassador-Resident Representative  
of Greece to the IAEA**

Mr. President,

allow me to congratulate you on your election and reassure you of our full confidence in your ability to successfully steer the work of this General Conference.

Greece aligns itself with the statement delivered by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union and in my national capacity I would like to make some additional remarks.

First of all, I would like to avail myself of this opportunity to commend once again Director General Grossi for his work over the past months, aimed at ensuring that the Agency **remains** fully operational throughout the pandemic. We also express our appreciation to the Secretariat of the Agency for their dedicated and professional work.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

The IAEA's multilateral, impartial, qualified and effective system of safeguards remains one of the core components of the NPT and a fundamental insurance for our security. Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements together with Additional Protocols represent the current verification standard. Their universalization must be pursued without delay, as a means to mutual trust and a necessary step towards a purely peaceful use of nuclear energy and applications.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Greece is deeply concerned about the increasingly worrying steps taken by Iran over the last few months towards the expansion of its nuclear programme, along with the parallel and serious undermining of the Agency's verification and monitoring activities under the JCPOA.

JCPOA is a key element of the global non-proliferation architecture and an important achievement of multilateral diplomacy, endorsed by the UN through Security Council Resolution 2231. Its full implementation is crucial for regional and international security. Therefore and in the aftermath of DG's recent visit to Tehran, we call upon Iran to abide by the recent understandings with the IAEA, as indicated in the September 12 Joint Statement, reverse all activities inconsistent with JCPOA and return, without any further delay, to its full implementation, including with regard to all transparency measures. We support the diplomatic efforts within the JCPOA Joint Commission and we believe that the Vienna discussions under the efficient coordination of the EU High Representative, could

substantially contribute to crystallizing choices that need to be made both by Iran and the United States.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

While nuclear energy is not an option for its national power mix, Greece remains a strong proponent of the third pillar of the NPT addressing the peaceful use of nuclear technology. We, therefore, acknowledge all States' sovereign right to opt for peaceful nuclear energy and recognize the importance of the IAEA Nuclear Safety and Security Standards to ensure nuclear safety and security worldwide.

Greece is a party to all main international Conventions in the field of nuclear safety. We strongly believe that transparency constitutes an essential component of instilling public confidence about the safety of nuclear energy. In this regard, we insist on the importance of systematically conducting peer reviews in member states and, accordingly, publishing the respective reports.

We regret that the Review Meetings under the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Management (JC) had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and reiterate the need for all Contracting Parties to consistently address their nuclear safety issues independently of these postponements. We welcome the growing number of Contracting Parties and encourage Member States that have not yet done so to follow suit.

On a national basis and towards achieving full compliance of the Greek legislation with the related European Directives, the second version of the Ministerial Decision (97529/2020) entitled "National Programme" for the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste was issued. Furthermore, secondary legislation in the form of Greek Atomic Energy Commission (EEAE) decisions and guidelines to facilitate the implementation of the Radiation Protection Regulations has also been published.

EEAE also submitted the Greek National Report under the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Greece would like to reaffirm its strong support for the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and underline the importance of results-based delivery of the TC projects, to ensure tangible socio-economic impact and respond to member states' policies in order to reach the Sustainable Development Goals.

IAEA's Technical Cooperation activities are acknowledged by the Greek Atomic Energy Commission and its high qualified staff, who share and gain experience by participating in Regional and Interregional Projects. Greek scientists continuously support IAEA activities by participating in various expert missions, while our experts have also 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.

Despite the challenging conditions of the pandemic, many Greek scientists continued to actively participate in various events (meetings, conferences, workshops, etc.), organized by the IAEA last year.

In addition to the above and taking into account the special working conditions due to

COVID-19, EEAE:

- successfully implemented teleworking for its staff, following security protocols and using virtual private networks,
- prioritized the authorization of diagnostic medical practices,
- successfully adapted its operational response to the pandemic challenges in the field of individual monitoring, which was presented as good practice to a special webinar organized by IAEA,
- conducted, at pilot phase, remote inspections to facilities implementing practices with radiation sources and adapted its training activities to the new conditions by launching on-line training.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

We would like to praise the important role of the Agency in supporting member states in comprehensive cancer control, including through the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) and encourage the enhancement of the coordination and systematic implementation of IAEA's cancer control-related activities.

We would also like to welcome the Director General's commitment to tackling global issues, such as pandemics and pollution, using nuclear technology.

In this vein, we highlight the importance of the ZODIAC initiative and welcome the organisation of this year's Scientific Forum on the critical issue of zoonotic diseases and its various parameters.

At the same time, we would like to strongly support the IAEA's project NUTEC Plastics, aimed at assisting Member States to address the challenges of marine plastic pollution. Greece, which for obvious reasons pays particular attention to the protection of the marine environment and is already involved in several synergies relevant to plastic pollution, stands ready to further contribute to this praiseworthy initiative.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Greece appreciates the important steps taken to enhance the representation of women at the Agency, including the Director General's announcement to establish a goal of achieving gender parity in the professional and higher categories by 2025, as well as the launch of the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme with the aim of helping increase the number of women in the nuclear field.

To conclude Mr. President,

Greece would like to reiterate its unrelenting support for the Agency's central role in ensuring the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We wish You and the Conference every success.

Thank you for your attention.