

**Statement by Mr Dainius Kreivys, Minister of Energy
of the Republic of Lithuania, at the 65th Session of the
General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

Mr President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Using this opportunity allow me to congratulate you, Mr President, on the election as the President of the 65th General Conference.

Mr President,

Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement made by Slovenia on behalf of the European Union. I would like to add the following.

Lithuania appreciates the International Atomic Energy Agency for its professionalism and good work organisation under exceptional circumstances due to the pandemic. We witnessed it by successfully carrying out the remote Integrated Regulatory Review Service follow-up mission in Lithuania at the end of 2020.

The mission concluded that Lithuanian institutions have shown a strong commitment to nuclear and radiation safety and have already implemented the vast majority of mission recommendations. We think that it is important to invite corresponding Agency mission in due time, but even more important – to implement all recommendations and suggestions carefully and without delay.

My country continues the decommissioning of Ignalina NPP under an immediate dismantling strategy while maintaining the highest

level of nuclear safety. Last year all undamaged assemblies of spent fuel from both Ignalina NPP units have been safely moved to the Interim Storage Facility. This way Lithuania is preparing for the pioneer dismantling of RBMK reactors – a huge technological challenge.

Mr President,

This year the world commemorates 35 years after the Chernobyl and the decade after the Fukushima accident. We welcome the progress made by the Agency in updating all safety standards for NPP design and operation. Therefore, it is crucial to ensure that these updated standards are applied by the Member States and especially by embarking countries – as customary and not as additional nonbinding recommendations.

We witness the unjustifiable rush of the commissioning of the Belarusian NPP in Ostrovets, without full implementation of the stress test recommendations.

It must be emphasized that the Belarussian government has not complied with the Article 17 of the Convention of Nuclear Safety regarding the evaluation of all relevant site-related factors and coordination with the neighbouring countries. Lithuania retains the position that Belarussian NPP is constructed in violation of international nuclear safety standards and should not be in operation.

We encourage the international community to be resolute and seek for the implementation of the International environmental,

nuclear safety and radiation protection standards – for this project and other similar projects around the world.

Mr President,

All Agency member states have committed to sustain and strengthen effective and comprehensive nuclear security of all nuclear and other radioactive material and facilities. Therefore, we are very concerned by public statements recently made by the Belarussian regime on a possible end of cooperation against cross-border nuclear smuggling.

Lithuania strongly supports international efforts towards full denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula – until then, sanctions must remain in place and be fully implemented. We encourage Iran to cooperate fully with the Agency and to return to undisputable compliance with the NPT and other relevant agreements.

Mr President,

Finally, given the discussions on the role of nuclear power in contributing to combat climate change, we would like to share our experience with the decommissioning of Ignalina NPP.

Our case convincingly demonstrates that before embarking on new nuclear power programmes we need to carefully evaluate all implications. Expansion or introduction of nuclear power requires a long-term commitment and substantive financial, technical and human resources. Careful consideration should be given not only to the construction and operation but also to the decommissioning and management of all types of radioactive waste and spent fuel.

To that end, we would like to invite Agency and the Member States to continuously work on the solutions for safe decommissioning and radioactive waste management.

Mr President,

I reaffirm Lithuania's continued support to the work of the Agency which plays a crucial role in ensuring nuclear safety, radiation protection and security worldwide.

Thank you