



*Стална мисија Босне и Херцеговине при ОЕБС, УН и другим међународним орг. у Бечу
Stalna misija Bosne i Hercegovine pri OSCE, UN i drugim međunarodnim org. u Beču
Permanent Mission of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the OSCE, United Nations Office and other
International Organizations in Vienna*

STATEMENT OF BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA

**Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Bosnia and Herzegovina to the UN in Vienna
H.E. Mr. Siniša Bencun**

**at the 66th General Conference
of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

Vienna, 26-30 September 2022

Mr. President,
Excellences,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the delegation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, allow me to congratulate to Amb. Alessandro Cortese, the Permanent Representative of Italy on his election as the President of the 66th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

At the outset, I would also like to express our gratitude to the DG Grossi, for his professionalism in steering the Agency during these challenging times, particularly the war conflict in Ukraine. At the same time, allow me to express our appreciation to the Agency and its Technical Cooperation Department (TCD) for the valuable assistance provided to Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as to thank all the countries for their XB contributions. We express our strong commitment to deepen cooperation with the TCD in the future.

Mr. President,

Bosnia and Herzegovina remains concerned by the decision of the Republic of Croatia to select Čerkezovac as a preferred location for the disposal of radioactive waste of low and middle radioactivity and disused radioactive sources of the Krško Nuclear Power Plant. Located in the Municipality of Dvor on Trgovska Gora,

Čerkezovac is in the close proximity to the border with Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Natural Park of the Una River.

There is a unanimous position within my country on inadmissibility of the radioactive waste disposal in the immediate vicinity of the border. With all available domestic and international tools, we challenge Trgovska Gora as a potential location for storage of radioactive waste. The scientific and professional analysis of the Expert and Legal Teams of Bosnia and Herzegovina present strong arguments to support our position, including, but not limited, to issues such as serious threat to the health of residents in 13 municipalities with around 230,000 people, threat of a potentially devastating environmental impact (biodiversity loss, food insecurity, soil contamination, surface water pollution etc.), and justified concerns that, due to the high risk of earthquakes, which was proven in recent past, this location hardly can meet necessary standards nor ensure safety protocols for the intended purpose. All listed is enough reasoning to be an issue of critical importance for Bosnia and Herzegovina

Mr. President,

We regretfully note the limited engagement of the relevant bodies of the Republic of Croatia on this issue, but we hope, nonetheless, for a continuation of constructive and inclusive dialogue, including an opportunity for a substantive engagement of Bosnia and Herzegovina in all related activities, field research and analysis. We strongly believe that joining the respective expertise of both countries would be beneficial for the resolution of this sensitive and important issue.

We repeat our request to reconsider the location of Trgovska Gora for the construction of a nuclear waste facility, with examination different locations, including possibility of radioactive waste disposal closer to the place of origin.

Bosnia and Herzegovina actively participated at the 6th Review Conference of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management. With number of questions raised and answered, we remain committed to resolving this issue in the spirit of good neighborly relations, respect for mutual interests and through dialogue, both bilaterally and in a multilateral environment, including the valuable assistance of the Agency.

Mr. President,

Bosnia and Herzegovina is preparing for the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission by the Agency, which will be held in Bosnia and Herzegovina starting on November 27, 2022. Based on those suggestions and recommendations, we will continue to improve our regulatory framework regarding ionizing radiation and nuclear safety, in accordance with IAEA requirements and standards.

Bosnia and Herzegovina continues to support the Agency's mandate in radiation and nuclear safety and security as well as role of promoting nuclear safeguards and verification. As we speak, just this week, Bosnia and Herzegovina is hosting IAEA Safeguards inspectors. With other partners we support the strengthening of the IAEA safeguards system reiterating the stand that Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements, together with the Additional Protocol, constitutes the current verification standard under the NPT.

We would also like to underline our appreciation of the IAEA Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN). Being a very active member of the European and Central Asian Safety Network (EuCAS network), we also perform the role of coordinator of Working Group No. 1 for Safety Infrastructure. We appreciate its efforts as very useful, both in terms of strengthening radiation and nuclear safety capacities, as well as through the education, trainings projects and experience exchange.

Mr. President,

Bosnia and Herzegovina is not a nuclear country, but we continue our efforts to be a valuable member of the IAEA, and to continue adopting and implementing the most important international treaties, conventions and agreements related to our international obligations. Looking the broad picture, only through effective multilateralism, with a healthy dose of mutual respect and a common vision for a better future, we can hope to meet those challenges, and for that, I wish us all best luck.

Thank you.