

National Statement by Finland September 28, 2022

66th IAEA General Conference

Mr President,

- It is a great pleasure and an honour to be here among you today.
- Finland aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union, to which I will add some remarks in my national capacity.
- Let me start by expressing my full support to the IAEA's work. I commend the Director General Grossi and the staff of the IAEA for their independent and professional work.
- I want to express support to the IAEA work concerning the nuclear safety, security and safeguards in Ukraine. The situation is especially critical concerning Europe's largest facility in Zaporizhzhia, which has been attacked and illegally seized by the Russian Federation. This is unacceptable. Russia must immediately withdraw all its armed forces from the Ukrainian nuclear facilities.
- It is regrettable that it was not possible to achieve a consensus outcome at the NPT Review Conference. We must continue our efforts to strengthen the Treaty.
- The IAEA safeguards system brings the NPT into practice, and into life. It is a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. In Finland, safeguards are important for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
- In this respect, I would like to mention a concrete example of our efforts to strengthen safeguards globally. I am pleased to inform, that Finland and the African Commission on Nuclear Energy, with expert support of the Radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority of Finland (STUK), are considering to launch an ambitious five-year program in 2023.

- Unfortunately, we face major proliferation challenges. Finland welcomes all diplomatic efforts to revive the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). This is a major contribution to nuclear non-proliferation. We hope that Iran will return to the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, including all its transparency measures.
- We emphasize the importance and essential responsibility of the IAEA in nuclear security. Finland continues to provide financial and in-kind support to the IAEA Nuclear Security activities.
- Today, nuclear history is in the making in Finland. We are approaching the start of deep geological disposal of spent nuclear fuel, as the first country in the world. Final disposal of spent fuel is expected to start in mid 2020s'.
- One essential element is to create functional safeguards for the back end of the fuel cycle with the IAEA and the European Commission.
- Climate change is a global challenge. Our goal is to make Finland carbon neutral by 2035. To get there, we need CO₂-free energy sources.
- In Finland, we have a long tradition in the use of nuclear power. I want to underline that nuclear energy and renewable energy sources are not mutually exclusive.
- We have in our energy mix one of the highest shares of renewables in Europe. Our electricity sector is already now largely decarbonized – the share of CO₂ free electricity production in Finland is currently 87%.
- Nuclear power is also important for the security of supply. Olkiluoto 3 nuclear power plant unit is currently in the test production phase.

Mr President,

- Finland starts its second year at the Board of Governors of the IAEA. We will continue to do our best to support the IAEA to implement its core mandate and work in its independent expert role. We also want to boost the use of new technologies, most notably small modular reactors.
- I thank you, Mr President.