

STATEMENT OF GEORGIA

International Atomic Energy Agency

66th General Conference

(26 – 30 September 2022)

Mr. President,

First, let me congratulate you on your election as the President of this year's General Conference. I assure you of our full support and commitment to the success of this conference.

Georgia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the European Union. Additionally, I would like to add the following remarks in my national capacity.

We attach great importance to the IAEA's core mandate in the fields of nuclear safeguards, safety, security, nuclear energy and technical cooperation. In this context, we support universal and effective implementation of the NPT and underline the importance of the Agency's safeguards system in the implementation of the Treaty. Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements together with Additional Protocols constitute the current verification standard and we continue to call for their universalization without any delay.

It is disappointing that the NPT review conference was unable to reach consensus due to Russia's rejection of a compromise document that would have enabled progress on nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

Mr. President,

Georgia stands in full solidarity with Ukraine and commends the people of Ukraine for their courage in defending their country against the unprovoked, unjustified and premeditated full scale aggression of the Russia which Georgia condemns in the strongest possible terms.

Russia's invasion of a sovereign country is a gross violation of international law, including the UN Charter, and it severely undermines European and global security and stability. Russia's actions pose serious and direct threats to the safety and security of Ukrainian nuclear facilities, and they have impeded the Agency from fully and safely conducting safeguards verification activities on the ground.

We welcome the IAEA Support and Assistance Mission to Zaporizhzhia (ISAMZ) and commend the Director General and his team in accomplishing this important mission.

Herewith we urge Russia to immediately cease its illegal war against Ukraine and to immediately withdraw its military and other personnel from the whole internationally recognized territory of Ukraine, including the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant so that the Ukrainian authorities can resume their sovereign responsibilities and that the legitimate operating staff can conduct their duties without outside pressure and interference.

Mr. President,

Prevention and response to the nuclear and radioactive threats is one of the main elements of the state security. Two regions of Georgia, which are occupied by Russia remain a security challenge in many dimensions. In this context we had documented attempts of smuggling nuclear and radioactive materials via Russian occupied regions. As a result of effective measures carried out by Georgian law-enforcement agencies, these illegal activities were duly prevented. However, in the absence of the international presence on Georgia's occupied territories, it has become virtually impossible to conduct any type of verification activities on the ground.

Georgia implements Safeguards Agreement with Additional Protocols since 2003. The relevant national regime has been significantly improved, which enshrines, on one hand, regulatory framework which is in full compliance with the international commitments of the country and on the other hand, technical arrangements.

Technical, financial assistance and active contribution in developing national regulations and systems for nuclear and radiation safety and security that Georgia receives from the Agency and our partners, namely from US, EU and Sweden are highly appreciated.

Mr. President,

The international community should take coordinated and holistic measures, especially in these difficult times, to effectively address the multidimensional peace and security challenges.

President, let me conclude by wishing the Conference a positive outcome.

I thank you.