



G R E E C E

IAEA General Conference

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**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 exceptionally demanding General Conference.

Greece aligns itself with the statement delivered by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union and in my national capacity I would like to highlight some additional points.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

During the last couple of years, the world faced increasingly complex challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic and its important socio-economic consequences were followed by an unprovoked and unjustified aggression in the very heart of the European continent. Russian Federation's invasion in Ukraine constitutes a blatant violation of fundamental concepts of International Law, such as the inviolability of borders.

Greece is particularly concerned about the nuclear safety and security situation in Ukraine. We applaud the IAEA Support and Assistance Mission to Zaporizhzhya and the persistent work of IAEA experts and inspectors to assess and support safety and security and apply safeguards at the plant. The Agency's continued presence at the plant constitutes an important contribution to the much needed transparency on site. In this vein, we also support the DG's proposal to establish a nuclear safety and security protection zone around ZNPP, the modalities of which are still to be agreed.

Regrettably, it is not only Zaporizhzhya. Serious recent incidents in other Nuclear Plants in Ukraine demonstrate clearly the potential significant dangers at the other nuclear facilities of the country.

We add our voice to the plethora of previous speakers who urged the Russian Federation to withdraw its forces from Ukraine and fully respect its territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

History has shown that a nuclear safety or security incident anywhere could have significant transboundary impacts and regional –or even global-implications. It is therefore imperative for each country to apply the highest standards of safety and security for the sake of mutual protection.

Greece, being a party to all main international Conventions in the field of nuclear safety, strongly believes that transparency constitutes an essential component of instilling public confidence about the safety of nuclear energy.

We fully support the Agency’s activities to improve nuclear safety worldwide and we are convinced that Member States benefit from actively utilizing the Agency’s expertise through peer review services, technical advisory missions and follow-up missions. We encourage member states to publish the results of these peer review missions in the interest of transparency and improvement of global nuclear safety. We also encourage the Agency to carefully consider Member State feedback, with a view to improving the quality and responsiveness of its activities, as part of conducting future missions.

The Seventh Review Meeting of the Joint Convention, was an important opportunity for Contracting Parties to come together, discuss current global nuclear safety issues and participate in the peer review process. Greece thanks the Presidency and the Secretariat for its efforts at the Review Meeting and looks forward to participating in the Convention on Nuclear Safety Review Meeting next year.

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.

In this regard, we regret that the 10th Review Conference of the NPT could not achieve consensus on a final outcome document., despite the

excellent work of Ambassador Zlauvinen of Argentina. The Agency and Member States must continue the full and robust implementation of nuclear safeguards including the application of the Additional Protocol, which is essential in building confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of nuclear activities.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Iran's systematic breaches of the JCPOA limits are of deep concern.

It is regrettable that the tireless diplomatic process launched in April 2021 by the EU High Representative, Mr. Josep Borrell, and his qualified team to facilitate a US return to the JCPOA and full US and Iranian implementation of their JCPOA commitments did not bear any fruit.

Greece urges Tehran to reverse the dangerous trajectory of its nuclear programme, and restore the access required for the Agency to give the International Community assurances that Iran's nuclear programme remains peaceful.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Greece accords paramount importance to the Agency for its central role in promoting with professionalism and commitment the peaceful uses of atomic energy for the development and prosperity of humankind while duly maintaining its safeguards work, even during the pandemic.

We welcome the significant strides that have been made on several of the Agency's flagship initiatives over the past year, including NUTEC Plastics, ZODIAC, ReNuAL 2, and Rays of Hope. Greece believes these projects are critical to tackling some of the greatest challenges of our time.

My country would like to particularly welcome NUTEC Plastics initiative as a very important tool in the fight against pervasive global plastic pollution, the maritime aspect of which, is of particular concern to countries like Greece.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

On a national basis, Greece is taking specific measures as regards nuclear knowledge management. Such measures include the active

participation of Greek scientists and institutions in the scientific projects and the education and training actions of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation programme.

The Greek Atomic Energy Commission (EEAE) in close cooperation with the IAEA organized in Athens, during the last year, numerous schools and workshops and assisted, via its well qualified experts, other member states in drafting radiation safety regulations and establishing national policies and strategies for Education and Training in Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety.

Moreover, the Greek government included, in the framework of the Recovery and Resilience Facility, the funding of an investment of several million Euros, regarding the strengthening of the national infrastructures for the management of radioactive waste and radiological emergency response. National emergency response plans (in case of a radiological or nuclear emergency) have also been improved and updated according to the relevant IAEA methodology.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Greece looks forward to the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century, to be held in October 2022 in Washington DC, as we believe that it will provide the opportunity for to enhance international dialogue on nuclear energy matters regardless of being a nuclear or a non-nuclear country. This event will occur at a turning point in world politics, when forces to maintain a Rules Based Order must prevail.

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.