

**Statement by Mr Albinas Zananavicius, Vice-minister of Energy  
of the Republic of Lithuania, at the 66<sup>th</sup> 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 66th General Conference.

Mr President,

Lithuania fully associates itself with the statement made by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union. In my national capacity, I would like to add the following.

Mr President,

We reiterate our condemnation in the strongest possible terms of Russia's deliberate and unprovoked war. Such unjustified invasion of its peaceful neighbour has grossly violated international law, undermined global security and even shook the foundations upon which the United Nations were built. We demand that Russia immediately and unconditionally ceases its military actions, withdraws all its troops from the entire territory of Ukraine. We also condemn Belarus for its support to the Russian aggression against Ukraine.

At present, Russia's military actions are threatening to cause yet another – nuclear – disaster. All seven indispensable nuclear safety and security pillars that the Director General outlined at the beginning of the armed conflict have been violated at the Zaporizhzhya NPP and other nuclear facilities by the Russian military forces. The occupation of the Zaporizhzhya NPP by the Russian military forces and the presence of Russian military equipment, as well as the Rosatom personnel on site undermines its security, increases the risk of a nuclear disaster and puts the operating staff under immense pressure. Shelling and occupying of Ukraine's nuclear facilities, or using them as a shelter is unprecedented and needs an adequate response.

Mr President,

Lithuania welcomes the IAEA Mission to Zaporizhzhya NPP and supports its efforts in establishing long term IAEA presence at the site. Lithuania fully supports the Director General's recommendation to establish urgently a Nuclear Safety and Security Protection Zone around the Zaporizhzhia NPP. But recent shelling on the South Ukraine NPP shows that it is not enough to protect only Zaporizhzhya NPP, nuclear safety can only be ensured by the unconditional withdrawal of all Russian armed forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine.

The aggressor must be held accountable. We find Russia's brutal violation of international laws and regulations, including the IAEA Statute, totally indefensible, therefore it is completely unacceptable that Russia continues to exercise its privileged role at the IAEA and its bodies.

The Russian aggression against Ukrainian civil nuclear facilities shows the inadequacy of the existing international mechanisms to address armed attacks against any nuclear installation devoted to peaceful purposes. It is important to improve existing international mechanisms to protect nuclear sites devoted to peaceful purposes in the context of war and entail a strict mechanism of rule enforcement and accountability.

Mr President,

Lithuania is deeply concerned about the unsafe irresponsible development and operation of the Belarusian nuclear power plant near the border of European Union. Many unresolved safety issues of the Belarusian NPP project still remain, such as the impact on the neighbor countries' environment and population, ensuring safety culture, and implementing international standards and recommendations. Lithuania has warned against unjustifiable rush of the commissioning of the Belarussian NPP in violation of international obligations regarding environmental protection and highest safety requirements and standards, resulting in repetitive equipment failures and prolonged outages. In

this context, lack of transparency and openness is also an issue of highest concern. Lithuania retains the position that the Belarusian NPP is constructed in violation of the international nuclear safety standards and should not be in operation.

Mr President,

Lithuania strongly supports international efforts towards full denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula – until then, sanctions must remain in place and be fully implemented. We call on the DPRK to cease all destabilising actions, abide by its international obligations under multiple UN Security Council Resolutions and re-engage in a credible and meaningful dialogue with the international community. We strongly urge Iran to reverse all activities inconsistent with the JCPOA and return, without any further delay, to its full implementation, including of all transparency measures. Timely and full cooperation with the IAEA remains more crucial than ever.

Mr President,

In May of this year, ARTEMIS mission was successfully carried out in Lithuania. The mission concluded that Lithuania is strongly committed to ensuring safe and effective management of spent fuel and radioactive waste now and in the future and invests in minimizing the generation of waste from decommissioning by applying appropriate processes. Mission provided several recommendations and suggestions how to further improve radioactive waste management. We are pleased to receive recommendations and suggestions of the ARTEMIS mission, which will help to overcome our future challenges and to explore opportunities in the decommissioning of Ignalina NPP and management of radioactive waste. We think that it is important for all countries 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. We reached a significant milestone in Ignalina NPP decommissioning –

finally both units of Ignalina NPP are successfully defueled. This is one of the biggest achievements in the decommissioning process so far and marks the end of the so-called post operation stage and beginning of “classic” decommissioning and we shared these achievements in the side event held yesterday at the auspices of the IAEA General Conference.

Mr President,

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

Thank you