

**SWEDEN**

**Statement**

**by**

**Annika Markovic**

**International Atomic Energy Agency**

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Thank you, Mr President,

Let me first of all congratulate you, Ambassador Cortese, on your appointment as President of the General Conference. We are pleased to see the Conference in such able hands, and I am looking forward to supporting you in my capacity of Vice-Chair. Sweden is aligned with the statement delivered by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union. The following remarks are in my national capacity.

Mr President,

This meeting takes place at a pivotal time in the Agency's history. The Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine is a grave violation of international law, including the UN Charter, and is aggravated by the fact that it is committed by a country that is a nuclear-weapon State, member of the UN Security Council and designated member of the IAEA Board of Governors. In the wake of the Russian aggression, the Agency reports of daily breaches of the seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security during military conflict put forward by the Director General. Meanwhile, the Agency's ability to draw safeguards conclusions for Ukraine, which has been limited since Russia's illegal annexation of the Crimea in 2014, will be further compromised unless the situation improves soon.

Since the invasion, Sweden has significantly increased its nuclear safety and security cooperation with Ukraine bilaterally and with other partners, and delivered important nuclear safety equipment in cooperation with Finland and Norway. We applaud the Agency's active assistance to Ukraine, notably the IAEA support and assistance mission to Zaporizhzhia (ISAMZ) and welcome the continued presence of IAEA experts at the facility. Pending Russia's full withdrawal from Ukraine's internationally recognized borders, we support discussions on modalities for a safety and security protection zone that would respect Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty.

Sweden is deeply concerned about the signs of expanded enrichment and reprocessing activities and preparations for another nuclear weapon test in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. These actions undermine regional and international peace and security and could further heighten tensions. Sweden once again calls on the DPRK, without any further delay, to fulfil its international commitments and undertake the complete, verifiable and irreversible disarmament of its nuclear weapons and ballistic missile programme, and immediately cease all related activities, in accordance with United Nations Security Council and IAEA General Conference resolutions. Sweden has on several occasions helped to facilitate a diplomatic dialogue towards a peaceful dialogue on the Korean Peninsula. Let me assure you, Mr. President, that we remain firmly committed in our engagement.

The situation in Iran has developed into a serious challenge to the safeguards system and the global non-proliferation regime. Iran's rapid expansion of enrichment capacities and amassing of enriched uranium including HEU with no plausible civilian applications is a reason for serious concern. So are limitations imposed on the Agency's verification authority and Iran's unwillingness to engage in meaningful consultations on the open safeguards issues. With regard to the JCPOA, we add our voice to the call on Iran to accept the EU's latest package proposal, so that the JCPOA could finally be restored. A return to the full and effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action would ensure sanctions relief and strengthen regional and international peace and security.

Mr President,

In the current, severely deteriorated security environment, it is more important than ever to protect the integrity of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). Sweden engaged actively in the efforts to strengthen the NPT at the 10<sup>th</sup> Review Conference last month. We therefore deeply regret that one delegation – the Russian Federation – blocked consensus. However, despite this setback, the NPT remains a cornerstone of the global disarmament and non-proliferation regime. Furthermore, Sweden stresses the continued validity of treaty obligations and commitments made in earlier outcome documents, as we now move forward into the next review cycle.

In the wake of the Covid crisis, the past year has seen Meetings of States Parties to the Joint Convention and to the Amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. In order to assist Member States in implementing the Amended Convention, Sweden recognizes the important role the Nuclear Security Series being kept relevant and updated, and will remain engaged in this regard. We look forward to a comprehensive follow-up that could set implementation targets for the Second Review Conference, which we hope will leave more room for a structured exchange of view on Convention implementation.

Mr President,

Sweden has reached a milestone in its nuclear waste management programme. Earlier this year, the Government approved the construction of a deep geological repository for the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel, as well as a construction license for an encapsulation plant. These achievements are a result of a unique engagement on the political and municipal level, and were recognized as *Good Practice* at the seventh review meeting of the Joint Convention. I would like to invite all delegates to attend the side event on this topic that Sweden organizes together with Finland on Wednesday afternoon.

Today, six nuclear power reactors remain in operation in Sweden providing almost one third of domestic electricity production, while seven are under decommissioning. The decommissioning strategy is immediate dismantling. Operational as well as the regulatory control activities are financed through the National Nuclear Waste Fund.

Sweden strongly supports the Agency's peer review missions which allow experts to discuss important safety matters and challenge each other's perceptions and actions. Sweden is scheduled for the second round Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission in November 2022 and the first ARTEMIS mission in April 2023. We appreciate the work that's been done within the Peer Review and Advisory Services Committee for enhancing the efficiency through combined and back-to-back missions.

Mr President,

The Agency continues to make important contributions to Member States' development goals and the 2030 Agenda through the promotion of nuclear applications for peaceful use. Sweden calls upon all Member States to pay their assessed contributions to the Technical Cooperation Fund on time and in full. This year, Sweden has provided extrabudgetary contributions through the Peaceful Uses Initiative to the Rays of Hope programme to help combat Women's Cancer and to the NUTEC Plastic programme.

Mr. President,

Sweden is pleased to note that the percentage of women's representation in the professional and higher categories now exceeds 40%. We encourage the Secretariat to continue promoting gender equality, while also paying due attention to other measures which go beyond staffing, including the mainstreaming of gender into its policies and organizational practises.

Thank you Mr President!