

**Statement of the Head of the Delegation of the Republic of Armenia,
Minister of Energy Infrastructures and Natural Resources
Mr. Ashot Manukyan at the 61st Annual Regular Session of
the IAEA General Conference
19 September 2017**

Madame President,

Allow me to congratulate you on being elected the President of the 61st Annual Regular Session of the International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference. I am certain that the results of the Conference will contribute further to achieving the main goals of the Agency. I would also like to welcome Grenada as a new member of the Agency.

On behalf of the Government of Armenia, allow me to extend our heartfelt congratulations to Director General Amano on his re-appointment. We look forward to continuing our fruitful cooperation.

Mr. Director General,

Madame President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to welcome all the participants of the Session and assure, that Armenia attaches great importance to developing its relations with the Agency, and to further strengthening our cooperation.

We strongly believe that for further development of nuclear energy it is crucial to pledge to non-proliferation of nuclear weapons. In this regard, the most vital factor is conscientious implementation of the commitments under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and application of adequate safeguards. According to the Agreement between Armenia and the Agency Armenia provides all the required documents, reports and official statements in

compliance with the Treaty. Moreover, we implement relevant activities necessary for the application of the named safeguards in our country.

Madame President,

Armenia continues to implement all the recommendations of the IAEA Mission to review the regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety, and of the consultation mission on physical protection in line with ratified work plans.

Representatives of Armenia participated in the international emergency response exercise (ConvEx) within the framework of the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, and Convention on Assistance in Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency.

This November we will be hosting the IAEA Mission to follow up with the schedule of activities aimed at increasing the level of physical protection.

Madame President,

I would like to state once again that the safety of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant (ANPP) is a top priority for the Government of Armenia. In October, we will host a regular session of the Nuclear Energy Safety Council under the President of Armenia, which comprises internationally acclaimed experts. During the session, the reports of ANPP and the Armenian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (ANRA) will be presented. Issues to be discussed include implementation of programmes to enhance design and operational safety of ANPP, and the current status of implementation of the programme on lifetime extension of the Unit 2.

Armenia is developing partnership with various countries to enhance peaceful uses of atomic energy. Presently, we are negotiating with the People's Republic of China, and a preliminary agreement has already been drafted.

To extend the lifetime of ANPP Unit 2, an Agreement has been signed between Armenia and Russian Federation, according to which, Armenia gets sovereign loan and a grant for funding the programme of extension.

Development of nuclear energy in Armenia requires education and training of highly qualified professional. With this regard, partnership between Armenia

and Russia has yielded some tangible results. Armenian students are being taught atomic disciplines in leading Russian universities.

In collaboration with the US Department of Energy, a training center was opened at the State Engineering University of Armenia, which provides professional development courses to the personnel of ANPP, Ministry of Emergency Situations and other interested agencies.

The ANPP and the State Engineering University of Armenia signed an agreement on establishing a forensic laboratory with the technical support of the US Department of Energy.

Madame President,

In compliance with in-depth review of the last IAEA mission, all the previous recommendations on seismic aspect of safety were fully implemented, as acknowledged in the final report of the IAEA. The final draft of the report on expert assessment of the ANPP stress test was submitted in September 2016. The list of activities developed in the result of the stress test is included in the action plan for lifetime extension of ANPP Unit 2. The conclusions of various renowned experts prove that the safety of ANPP is in compliance with the international standards.

With technical support of the European Union, a Strategy of Managing Radioactive Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel has been developed. An amended Concept Paper was ratified by the President of Armenia in January, 2017, and a new Strategy on the Safe Management of Radioactive Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel is developed.

In compliance with the commitments under Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, Armenia is about to complete the second national report, to be submitted to the Agency in October, 2017.

In 2016 Armenia submitted another national report in compliance with the commitments under the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Overall, 92 follow-up

questions were raised regarding this national report. At the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, where Armenia's national report was presented, we addressed all the questions received after submission. We also provided responses to some other additional questions raised by IAEA members and international organizations.

In compliance with the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, relevant information exchange has been taking place. According to the specified requirements, we provide the Agency with record of nuclear materials and relevant statements. In 2017, joint inspection missions were carried out to monitor implementation of commitments regarding Safeguards and their application. In August 2017, the World Association of Nuclear Operators (WANO) carried out a peer review at ANPP.

All the above-mentioned evidence proves that the Republic of Armenia carries out its commitments, and is open to and ready for a constructive dialogue and mutually beneficial cooperation.

The IAEA Department of Nuclear Energy holds an exceptional role in organizing and implementing various programmes aimed at developing nuclear energy for peaceful uses. Taking this opportunity, I would like to confirm once again Armenia's interest and willingness to participate in a number of INPRO (International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles) initiatives, especially in those targeting small and medium sized reactors, as well as in programmes aiming at development of methodology for management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel. Incidentally, the Republic of Armenia is an active member of INPRO.

Madame President,

Armenia is a consistent advocate of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons and peaceful uses of atomic energy. Based on these principles, the Government has established close cooperation with IAEA, which involves quite a large range of issues related to nuclear safety, including physical protection of nuclear materials. We highly appreciate this cooperation and regard it as a top priority.

The decision to extend the life cycle of the Metsamor NPP was made by the Armenian Government after thorough consultations with the IAEA and its international partners, and all the measures are taken to ensure its safety and security. Armenia closely cooperates on a regular basis with the International organizations and partner countries with regard to all nuclear energy issues. Numerous on-site inspections and assessment missions have reaffirmed Armenia's commitment to implementing its international obligations and the highest level of openness and transparency.

With this in mind and being determined to further Armenia's cooperation with the IAEA almost five years ago, in 2013, my country has submitted its application for the membership of the IAEA Board of Governors. We are grateful to the Eastern European Group for the endorsement of Armenia's candidacy for 2017 elections of the Board. May I do assure that once elected to the IAEA Board of Governors Armenia will spare no efforts to further develop and deepen cooperation with the IAEA in strengthening nuclear safety and security, and contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals through active cooperation in the areas of nuclear science and technology.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our full support for the IAEA activities aimed at further development of peaceful and safe uses of atomic energy.

Thank you for your attention!