

61st General Conference of the IAEA

Statement

The Republic of Latvia

Mr. Rinalds Muciņš, State Secretary on the Ministry of Environmental Protection and Regional Development of the Republic of Latvia,

Vienna, Austria, 19 September 2017

Madam President, Director General, Excellences, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Latvia fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Estonia on behalf of the European Union. Please allow me to make some remarks in a national capacity.

I am pleased to join others in congratulating you on your election as the President. On behalf of the Latvian Government I would also like to congratulate His Excellency Yukiya Amano for his re-election as Director General. Latvia furthermore welcomes the application for membership by Grenada.

Madam President,

Nuclear safety and security

Latvia sees great benefit and further potential from the peaceful applications of nuclear technologies, including in achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). At the same application of new and existing technologies should be promoted while simultaneously ensuring the highest level of nuclear safety and security. Latvia is fully committed to this approach while providing cutting edge services in Nuclear Medicine, including the application of cyclotron technology at the new Nuclear Medicine Centre in Latvia.

Furthermore, Latvia emphasizes the importance of conducting a full spectrum of IAEA missions to assess safety of new NPPs.

I would like to underline that the foundation for ensuring nuclear safety globally is transparency, international cooperation and an efficient information exchange among neighbouring countries.

Nuclear non-proliferation, Safeguards and Nuclear Verification

For Latvia the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is the cornerstone of the global non-proliferation and disarmament regimes. Latvia is strongly committed to the full implementation of the NPT and welcomes the substantial progress made under its three mutually reinforcing pillars.

We would like to emphasize the importance of the IAEA safeguards system in the implementation of the NPT. Serious proliferation challenges which continue to present themselves underline the need to find peaceful and diplomatic solutions to them.

Latvia welcomes the ongoing implementation by all parties of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which is a major diplomatic achievement. Latvia strongly supports and highly appreciates the central role of the IAEA in ensuring the verification and monitoring of the implementation of the JCPOA.

My country recognizes the importance of ensuring the necessary resources for the Agency to carry out its role in Iran. In this regard, I note that for the last three years Latvia has made financial extra budgetary contributions for this purpose.

Latvia condemns in the strongest terms DPRK's irresponsible, aggressive and provocative actions in holding nuclear tests and ballistic missile launches, which increase instability and pose threat to peace and security not only on the Korean Peninsula but also on a global scale.

Latvia supports the efforts of the United Nations Security Council and calls on all countries to implement, strictly and without exception, the sanctions imposed on DPRK by the UN Security Council. Latvia supports and welcomes IAEA's continued readiness to address the DPRK situation in accordance with its mandate.

Technical Cooperation

Latvia commends the IAEA Technical Cooperation Department for their invaluable support to Member States, particularly its guidance on adjusting regulatory frameworks to ensure the high standards of safety, security and safeguards.

For the next planning cycle 2018-2019, Latvia has submitted three national projects where our main effort will be on improving the capacity of the secondary standards dosimetry laboratory for radiation protection measurements, enhancing nuclear and radiation safety and organizational effectiveness of regulatory infrastructure, strengthening knowledge and skills in radiotherapy quality and safety.

We are grateful to the IAEA for the possibility which it has provided to Latvian institutions to strengthen the competence in various areas of nuclear safety and security.

I would also like to note that this year we will host two regional training courses for medical personnel and public communication professionals from Eastern

Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. My country is very interested to become one of the host countries for medical personnel training.

I am certain that sharing knowledge and experience will continue to provide great benefits for all countries in the future.

Madam President,

To conclude, I would like to use this opportunity to express that we are honoured to have been elected to the IAEA Board of Governors in the capacity of the Vice-Chairman of the Board for the last two years. During this time Latvia has been an active participant in the work of the IAEA, including chairing the Open Ended Working Group for the development of the IAEA Medium Term Strategy 2018-2023. Latvia is dedicated to continue the efforts of strengthening the rules' based international order as in the IAEA as well as in other international organizations and export control regimes.

Finally, I would like to emphasize the indispensable role of the Agency. Its activities and guidance in the implementation of safeguards agreements and promotion of non-proliferation prove the effectiveness of international cooperation and dialogue as the best approach for solving complex issues to ensure international peace and security.

Thank you, Madam President