

STATEMENT

By Mr. Tapdiq Amiraslanov
Deputy Minister
Ministry of Emergency Situations of the
Republic of Azerbaijan

Sixty-Seventh Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy
Agency

Vienna, 25-29 September 2023

Madam President,

Excellences,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We congratulate Ambassador Vilawan Mangklatanakul on her election as the President of the Conference and wish her success in her work.

We also congratulate Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi on his re-appointment as the Director General of the Agency and wish him much success in his complicated job.

Madam President,

Through its national activities and multilateral efforts, Azerbaijan supports the IAEA as the primary venue for international dialogue and cooperation on peaceful use of nuclear technologies. During our Chairmanship of the Non-Aligned Movement over the past four years, promoting the role of the IAEA has occupied a prominent place in our Chairmanship agenda.

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to its cooperation with the IAEA and its indispensable role in promotion of uses of nuclear energy for peace, health and prosperity across the globe. Azerbaijan has joined various activities administered by the IAEA. The high-level dialogue between Azerbaijan and the IAEA contributes to the extension and deepening of the cooperation.

We are interested in making greater contribution to the work of the Agency. With that understanding, we submitted our candidacy for the membership of the Board of Governors.

Azerbaijan aims to utilize its potential Board membership to support the organization's priority areas, including peaceful nuclear energy cooperation, technology for detecting illicit transfers, enhanced verification mechanisms, human resources development in nuclear physics, and agricultural productivity through nuclear technology.

We hope that our candidacy will find an overwhelming support by esteemed member states.

Madam President,

Over the past two decades, Azerbaijan and the IAEA have built strong partnership ties serving to advance our shared goal of peaceful uses of nuclear technologies.

We would like to highlight our fruitful cooperation with the IAEA in the field of cotton growing, monitoring and ensuring radiation safety of the environment, use of nuclear and radiological technologies in diagnosis and treatment of oncological diseases, radiation processing of materials, preparedness and response to nuclear and radiological

emergencies and further strengthening the national infrastructure for radioactive waste management.

For more than 20 years, the IAEA has provided support to the National Oncology Centre of Azerbaijan. In this regard, Azerbaijan appreciates the efforts undertaken by the Agency through the “Rays of Hope” initiative launched by Director General Grossi.

Another crucial field of cooperation with the Agency is the radiological monitoring of the liberated territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan with the use of cutting-edge technologies. Implementation of the “First State Program on the Great Return to the liberated territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan” has already started.

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to ensuring security of nuclear and radioactive materials. Benefitting from international cooperation, we are taking active measures to strengthen border control to prevent smuggling and illicit trafficking of radioactive and nuclear materials, to improve the security of facilities using nuclear and radioactive materials, and to ensure transportation security of such materials. We are taking stringent measures to establish and enhance effective border control along the liberated areas to ensure that these territories are no longer used for illegal purposes, including illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials.

Azerbaijan is committed to the international cooperation in nuclear security, further universalization and implementation of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and highly appreciates the establishment of the IAEA Nuclear Security Training and Development Centre (NSTDC).

We also support the efforts to enhance nuclear safety, including addressing the safety challenges posed by nuclear reactors. While we fully respect the right of States to pursue peaceful use of nuclear technologies to meet their needs, the inherently transboundary impact of this technology must be duly taken into consideration.

Azerbaijan remains concerned with the safety risks emanating from the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant in Armenia. This NPP, which was built during 1976-1980, based on an old-fashioned technology is located in the active seismic zone. The unfortunate combination of outdated technology, wear and tear, and the seismic location makes Metsamor NPP a source of concern for the region. We appreciate the efforts of the Agency to strengthen security and safety of civilian nuclear facilities worldwide and call upon Armenia to comply with the recommendations of the Agency, and take necessary steps to address the concerns of the neighboring States in a transparent manner, in line with its international obligations.

Madam President,

In conclusion, I would like to express our appreciation for the activities of the Agency aimed at the use of atomic energy for peaceful purposes and increasing the level of safety and security throughout the world. Azerbaijan will continue to provide the necessary assistance and support to the IAEA.

Thank you for your attention.