Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference
of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

First session, Vienna, 2 – 12 May 2017

Intervention by the Czech Republic on Cluster III

Mr. Chairman,

Since this is the first time the Czech Republic is taking the floor, allow me to congratulate you on the assumption of the chairmanship of the first PrepCom meeting and assure you of the full cooperation of my country’s delegation. While subscribing to the EU Statements, I would like to touch upon some issues that have special importance for us nationally.

This PrepCom opens a new review cycle, which will be concluded by the 2020 NPT Review Conference. The next RevCon will also mark the 50th anniversary of the Treaty's entry into force. The Czech Republic believes that a substantial and strong outcome of this anniversary review cycle could also bring about a fresh impetus to cluster III as a whole.

The Czech Republic has been a steadfast supporter of the right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy, provided that the right is exercised in a responsible manner, through honouring non-proliferation obligations recognized in international standards and safeguards agreements. In this regard it must be ensured that there is a balance of rights and obligations of all States Parties to the NPT. It is also essential to reaffirm the central role of the IAEA not only in the safeguards, nuclear safety and security but also in non-energy nuclear applications. We also believe that for further progress in achieving the goals of the 2010 Action Plan, related to cluster III issues, the leadership of the IAEA is crucial, and we call upon all States Parties to support the IAEA in its efforts.

In this context we would like to point out the importance of international cooperation in order to strengthen safeguards, nuclear safety and security through universal accession to all relevant conventions as soon as possible.

Furthermore, it is our conviction, that nuclear safeguards, safety and security are mutually complementing and reinforcing areas, all of which in fact enable and facilitate the access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The Czech Republic recognizes the value of Article IV of the NPT, but to take a real advantage of it, environment of trust and confidence must be created. The IAEA’s safeguards constitute a key element for its development. We also strongly support accession to the Additional Protocol by all States, which haven’t yet done so.
We are encouraged by the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The JCPOA represents a major multilateral achievement endorsed by a UN Security Council resolution. With this in mind, it is my pleasure to recall that the Czech Republic supported the JCPOA with a voluntary financial contribution.

Mr. Chairman,

The Czech Republic contributes to the strengthening of safeguards and IAEA’s capacities through the Member States Support Program under which we host on an annual basis, among other activities, the Comprehensive Inspection Exercise at LWRs, which was attended by 12 students and 3 instructors last year. We also host a Nuclear Materials Accounting in Action course, which was attended by 16 participants. The most sought is probably the Technical visit to Uranium Mines which was attended by 18 Agency employees last year. Moreover the Czech Republic made its nuclear facilities available for testing of new IAEA equipment and technologies.

In 2016, the Czech Republic contributed more than 300,000 EUR to the Fund of Technical Cooperation Program. The Czech Republic made also an extra-budgetary contribution of almost 75,000 EUR to the Armenian project, specifically for “Upgrading National Nuclear Regulatory Infrastructure”.

The Czech Republic also helps to strengthen IAEA’s efforts to provide technical support to its Members. Last year, several entities in the Czech Republic provided 12 long-term fellowships and 23 short-term scientific visits for foreign experts. Education courses focused on advanced nuclear technologies in medicine, radiation protection and nuclear waste management, and training courses on the Czech research reactors are highly valued.

The Czech Republic participates in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and our experts take part in all GICNT meetings and exercises. Our national experience shows that sharing best practices and participating in exercises in the GICNT framework is useful and serves our interests.

Last but not least, it is my pleasure to inform you about the completion of the update of our legislation comprehensively covering the nuclear area. After several years of intensive work, a new Atomic Act accompanied by a set of implementing regulations entered into force at the beginning of this year.

Mr. Chairman,

Let me conclude by reiterating the Czech Republic’s commitment to promotion of safety and safeguards culture on the international level and emphasizing the strong support of the Czech Republic for the IAEA’s work in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Thank you for your attention.

*Due to time constrains, yellow-marked fields not for delivery.*