

final Hungary

Director General,
Chairperson,
Excellencies,

1. I have the honour to speak in my capacity as Chair of the Council of the Energy Ministers of the European Union. At the outset allow me to express our appreciation to Director General Yukiya Amano for his efforts to organize and to Ambassador Antonio Guerreiro for his efforts to prepare this Ministerial Conference under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency as a significant event on nuclear safety.
2. I would like to express again our sincere condolences and solidarity to the people and government of Japan for the tragic events that occurred on 11 March 2011 and that caused serious loss of life and damage following the earthquake and the subsequent tsunami. Loss of human life is always beyond all bearings.
3. We appreciate the IAEA's efforts on several activities undertaken with regard to the nuclear accident that occurred in Fukushima. Additionally I would like to reconfirm that the European Union and its Member States are ready to respond to further requests for assistance from both the Government of Japan and the Agency.
4. In the light of the crisis at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant the Ministerial conference provides an excellent opportunity to start a lessons-learned process with follow up actions. The issue of improving nuclear safety has become more timely, as several fora have dealt with the topic since the Japanese accident. This event should launch a process in the course of which, the legal framework regarding nuclear safety could be reviewed.
5. In regard to the Fukushima Daiichi accident, the European Union promptly reacted by convening a High Level Conference of the governments, national nuclear regulators, and key stakeholders of the industry on 15 March 2011 where Mr Günter Oettinger, EU Commissioner for Energy, put forward the proposal on the Targeted Reassessment of Safety, commonly known as stress test. Right after the High Level Conference the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union convened an extraordinary TTE (Transport, Telecommunication and Energy) Council on 21 March, which has resulted in an outline of the process leading to the stress tests.
6. EU Member States last month agreed on the necessity and voluntary performance of comprehensive safety assessments and they stated their intention to support the implementation of the highest safety requirements not only for nuclear power plants in the European Union, but also in neighbouring countries by undertaking similar tests. I would like to stress that the European Union stands ready to inform the Agency and its Member States on the progress of Targeted Reassessments for Safety.

7. In addition, I would like to mention that in parallel with the stress tests the European Council has decided to put the existing European legal and regulatory framework for the safety of nuclear installations under revision by the end of the year 2011. This intention of the European Union is in accordance with the aim of the contracting parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety to undertake possible measures for strengthening the provisions of the Convention.
8. The latest event for discussion on nuclear safety was the informal ministerial seminar on the 7 June organized by the French Presidency of the G8 – G20 with the Technical Secretariat of the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency. The participants agreed on the importance of strengthening international mechanisms, increasing international cooperation and improving the safety of facilities in terms of prevention and management of major accidents.
9. As for another important aspect of nuclear energy, the Hungarian Presidency of the Council of the European Union has made efforts towards the adoption of a Council Directive (Euratom) on the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste. As a matter of priority 12 revisions of the text of the proposal for Council Directive were made this year. After several months of discussion all major issues have been largely agreed between Members States. The European Parliament is expected to vote on the proposal on 23 June. The Hungarian Presidency will make its best to succeed in contributing to the adoption of a legally-binding framework for the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste.
10. As for this important occasion within the confines of IAEA, I have to mention that Hungary was among the first 59 member states of this international organisation of cooperation in the nuclear field and it has been an active member since its existence. The IAEA organises several meetings in Hungary and also invites Hungarian experts to assist in IAEA reviews in other countries which is very useful in exchanging experiences between experts. The peer reviews of the IAEA conducted in Hungary reaffirmed our commitment on the continuous improvement of nuclear safety.
11. Hungary has been committed to carrying out the stress test since the beginning. As an evidence of our firm commitment I can inform you that the Hungarian Atomic Energy Authority (HAEA) has already specified its requirements regarding the content of the Targeted Safety Reassessment to the Hungarian operator, Paks NPP. The HAEA has compiled the requirements on the basis of recommendations made by WENRA, as well as contributions by leading Hungarian nuclear safety experts, and specifications and methodologies accepted by the EU Commission and ENSREG. The implementation of the Target Safety Reassessment will lead to arrangements targeted at a higher level of nuclear safety.
12. In view of root causes behind the major accident in Fukushima both internal and external events which could affect the operation of Paks nuclear power plant must be evaluated. With respect to the characteristics of Paks NPP site I can mention external causes such as earthquakes, low or high level of river of

Danube, lightning, lack of ice or snow, extreme temperature and a combination of the aforementioned elements. The operator of Paks NPP shall also take into account such extreme weather conditions when heavy vehicles are not able to approach the site for 72 hours, or light vehicles and portable tools for 24 hours. The licensee of Paks NPP is to conclude the findings in a Progress Report till 15 of August which shall be reviewed by HAEA till 15 of September.

13. I would like to emphasize that Hungary pays special attention to the Targeted Safety Reassessment Program, especially because in our National Energy Strategy nuclear energy is assigned a key role in the future, too. 43 per cent of the domestic electricity production was generated by the Hungarian nuclear power plant last year. Nuclear energy has an important share in the Hungarian energy mix. Hungary's energy supply is unimaginable without nuclear energy in the forthcoming decades. In 2005, the Hungarian Parliament acknowledged a 20-year extension for our nuclear power plant to ensure secure electricity supply in the long-term. In addition, in 2009, the Hungarian Parliament gave preliminary approval of the commencement of the **construction of new units on the Paks NPP site.**

14. As it is the competence of Member States to determine their energy policy and energy mix, we all have to recognize decisions of states about using or not using nuclear energy. After the events that occurred in Fukushima, public confidence in the safety of nuclear power plants has been shaken, and arguments against nuclear energy have propped up. Some countries have announced to gradually close down and disassemble their nuclear power plants, while others have decided to build new reactors or add further units to their existing nuclear installations. When making the right decision in this question each country should consider if nuclear energy is replaceable or not from the point of view of its secure energy supply. Obviously, if nuclear power plants are phased out, the missing capacities should be supplemented by other energy sources or by energy imports.

15. I hope our future meetings will be about exchanging our knowledge and experience to prevent nuclear accidents and about strengthening nuclear safety in all nuclear energy producing countries. Chairperson, with your permission I would like to hand over to my colleague from the European Commission, Mr. Oettinger who will complete this statement.

I thank you Mr Chairman!

