

**Statement by the Head of Delegation of Ukraine  
at the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety  
(20-24 June 2011, Vienna)**

Mr. President,

At the outset allow me to express our most sincere condolences and deepest sympathy to the people and Government of Japan for the tragic loss of human life which has resulted from the 11 March earthquake and the tsunami. We have been following events at the Fukushima Daiichi NPP closely and are grateful to Japan for the continuous improvement in the quality and quantity of the information it is providing on developments. We acknowledge enormous efforts invested by Japanese personnel in the fight to control the situation at the nuclear power plant and we applaud the courage shown by the workers at the Fukushima Daiichi NPP under such difficult conditions. Ukraine stands in full solidarity with the people of Japan and our resources are at the disposal of Japan for any assistance possible.

Mr. President,

We acknowledge and support the IAEA's efforts in response to the accident. We are looking forward to detailed discussion at this Conference to identify areas that need to be further addressed. The Conference should launch a process of reevaluation and enhancement of nuclear safety worldwide and of further strengthening the international response to nuclear accidents and emergencies.

Mr. President,

This year the world community commemorated the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Chornobyl NPP catastrophe. The accident in Japan has shifted the focus of the Kyiv Summit on Safe and Innovative Use of Nuclear Energy held in April this year from summary of lessons learned and measures taken in respect to mitigation of Chornobyl NPP aftermaths to a more wide issue of nuclear safety and emergency response challenges in the light of current situation at the Fukushima Daiichi NPP.

We believe that one of the outcomes of the Kyiv Summit was the unanimous recognition by its participants of the necessity to secure adequate level of nuclear safety, as the key priority, throughout every and each stage of nuclear energy production. In the final declaration of the Kyiv Summit it was reiterated that the highest standards of nuclear safety are an indispensable prerequisite for the use of nuclear energy.

The Chornobyl NPP accident in 1986, 25 years ago, has triggered not only the revision of international nuclear safety standards but creation of numerous international instruments to ensure both highest level of nuclear, waste and radiation safety worldwide and the relevant system of emergency preparedness and response. This process should get a new impetus as we convene today for this Conference.

We believe that given its unique capabilities and expertise, the Agency has a leading role to play in any nuclear related accident or emergency. Its on-site involvement is therefore vital in addressing the situations like at the Fukushima Daiichi NPP. For this reasons let me present some our thoughts on two main areas where the Agency's activity and our work could be improved.

1. Implementation of safety standards. While the responsibility for nuclear safety and security rests with each Member State, we believe that the IAEA Safety Fundamentals and Safety Requirements should be obligatory for states, which have active civil nuclear programmes with working NPPs and research reactors. The Agency has a mandate in this sphere as it had been originally envisaged in Article XII A,B,C of the Agency's Statute.

We believe that IAEA safety review services should be effectively used by Member States as an indispensable instrument to evaluate facilities and activities in a comprehensive and comparable manner. Both Member States and the Agency would benefit from systematic use and benchmarking of such services. They could contribute also to the constant reevaluation and improvement of the safety standards themselves.

Ukraine reiterates its commitment to the universalization of the nuclear safety instruments and the Agency's nuclear safety standards. We, as a matter of utmost importance, call on Member States which had not yet done so to become parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Early Notification Convention, the Assistance Convention, the amended Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the Joint Convention.

2. Response to nuclear emergency. The accident has highlighted the importance of consolidating cooperation between the Agency and other international organizations and institutions to take full advantage of all their resources and expertise. Necessary modalities and mechanisms should be established for their joint work in response to a nuclear crisis. The Agency should remain at the forefront of all efforts aimed at detailed analysis of a nuclear event. The Agency's professional evaluation of the situation is of vital importance for ensuring national safety.

It is clear that the existing international treaty basis concerning reaction to nuclear disasters requires improvement. While acknowledging that it is still too early to draw definite conclusions from the current crisis, we believe that a review should be undertaken whether the system based on the Early Notification Convention and the Assistance Convention has done enough to enhance confidence and to enable timely information sharing and the mobilization of international assistance.

Mr. President,

Recent developments in Japan have resulted in widespread concern about the safety of nuclear power plants worldwide and have led to deliberations and concerns about feasibility of nuclear energy as a source of power generation.

It is clear that there are many lessons to be learned from the Fukushima accident. It is widely accepted that we need to restore confidence in nuclear safety culture, in order to provide assurances to the public that the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is safe.

We would like to emphasize that, since the Chornobyl disaster, an enormous amount of work had been done in Ukraine to improve nuclear power plant safety and to introduce measures to prevent serious accidents. In my country the issue of lessons from the Fukushima accident was seriously considered at the National Security and Defense Council meeting in April this year and the relevant decisions were adopted and promulgated by the Presidential Decree. In light of situation at the Japanese NPP we conduct targeted reassessment of safety of all our nuclear power units in operation, introduce measures to reinforce independent position of the national nuclear regulatory authority and, as the top priority, make a comprehensive review of the national nuclear regulatory framework. Ukraine has joined the European initiative of conducting 'stress-tests' and is also ready to participate in the relevant peer review processes.

We consider nuclear energy a feasible option for power generation and for diversification of energy mix. For this it is critical to ensure that the highest safety standards are met.

Thank you.