

Statement of the Head of Delegation of the Slovak Republic
Ms. Marta Žiaková,
Chairperson of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic,
at the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety

Mr. Co-Presidents, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Slovak delegation I would like to thank the Government of Japan and the International Atomic energy Agency for organizing this conference and to learn about the progress in dealing with the consequences of the Great East Japan Earthquake.

The Slovak Government supports the new energy architecture based upon the unified EU energy policy. The optimal and well balanced energy mix with the emphasis on low carbon technologies is one of the most important pillars of energy policy of the Slovak Republic.

In accordance with this policy the following priorities have been set in the nuclear area by the Government:

1. to enhance the dynamics of the completion NPP of Mochovce 3 and 4 units;
2. to accelerate the preparedness for the construction of a new nuclear power source
3. to maintain a high level of nuclear safety.

The main priority in the peaceful use of nuclear energy is maintaining high level safety of nuclear installations.

The history of improving nuclear safety in Slovakia dates back to the 90's of the last century, when extensive programs of nuclear safety improvement have been launched on both operating NPPs and on the NPPs under construction based on the latest international standards and scientific and technical knowledge. This process continues without interruption to the present days. As part of the periodic safety assessment of nuclear power plants, which is undertaken every 10 years, the Nuclear Regulatory Authority conditioned further operation of nuclear power plants to fulfil additional measures, primarily in areas such as seismic resistance, external influences, resistance against severe accidents, etc.

My Government supported the so called stress tests, which were completed in June 2012. The final report of the European Nuclear Regulators Group (ENSREG) confirmed a high level of safety of nuclear power plants in Slovakia and recommended to continue with measures to increase the safety level that were already adopted prior to the events in Fukushima, in particular with regard to severe accident management. As a follow up of stress test, Slovakia is elaborating a National Action Plan for the implementation of findings and recommendations derived from the stress tests.

In this context I underline the importance and value of international safety review missions. In 2012 Slovakia hosted the International Regulatory Review Service Mission (IRRS Mission). The IRRS team reviewed and identified a number of good practices and made recommendations and suggestions where improvements should enhance the effectiveness of the regulatory framework and functions in line with the IAEA Safety Standards. The IRRS Mission has highlighted the independence of the Nuclear Regulatory Authority and the conduct of its regulatory processes in a well-organized, open and transparent manner. The recommendations and suggestions were subject to a thorough

analysis and an action plan for their implementation was elaborated and approved by the government at its session on 28th November. It is expected that a follow up mission will be invited for 2015 to assess the progress made in implementing the recommendations and suggestions.

As regards nuclear installations an OSART Mission took place in November 2010 at Bohunice V-2 units. The OSART Follow- up Mission was hosted at the beginning of June (4-8 June 2012), which reviewed the progress achieved in areas where recommendations and suggestions have been proposed. Good practices and satisfactory progress have been stressed by the follow-up mission.

Whereas nuclear safety is a national responsibility, the existing framework of international legal instruments represents – in our opinion – an adequate base for preserving and increasing nuclear safety – both nationally and internationally. Slovakia supports the steps leading to accession of new countries which are developing their nuclear power programs, to all relevant international Conventions, and in particular, to the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention. Slovakia stands ready to discuss with other Contracting parties measures to strengthen the implementation of these instruments.

In this context Slovakia welcomed the *High-level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security* (New York, 22 September 2011), in particular its request to conduct prompt national reviews of their emergency preparedness and response arrangements and capabilities with the IAEA Secretariat providing support and assistance as requested. As a follow-up measure a nationwide exercise took place at nuclear power plant Bohunice in October 2012. The evaluation and conclusions will be available in late December 2012.

In conclusion I would like to state that nuclear safety is not a rigid status but a long term systematic process. Notwithstanding the fact that our nuclear

installations are considered to be safe, operated in accordance with the national requirements and international standards there is still room for their improvement based on the latest knowledge. This principle should be recognized by all of us.

Thank you for your attention,