

Speech by Minister Samo Omerzel, Republic of Slovenia

Dear President, Director Generals, Ministers,

Dear High Representatives,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very honoured to be here today and would like to thank you for letting me contribute to this very interesting debate. Let me begin with an overview of the status of nuclear energy in Slovenia, a nation of only 2 million people.

Despite having only one operating nuclear power plant, approximately one third of electricity produced in Slovenia comes from nuclear energy. This in contrast presents only half of production in our nuclear power plant Krško, which is half-owned by Slovenia, and half by Croatia. The other half of production is therefore transferred into the Croatian power system.

Krško nuclear power plant is a Pressurised Light Water Reactor type of Westinghouse production. It has been in commercial operation for thirty years. During this period, expectations on safety and stability were met, and consequently public acceptability grew.

Krško nuclear power plant is currently planned to serve 40 years in production, which means it would have to be shut down in 2023. However, we are thinking of extending the service life for additional 20 years. Of course, a precondition for this is the implementation of all necessary improvements to ensure that the highest standards on safety and stability are met. We are making constant investments and

improvements, in cooperation with more than 400 engineers in our country.

When we take in consideration all these facts, next question is the 2nd unit. This for me is not a tough question and the answer is yes. Do I trust in this technology? Yes I do. As a young engineer I believe in all the people dedicated to this project and a positive disposition of public opinion.

Evidently, nuclear safety and stability are the most important, when we speak of public acceptability of nuclear energy, and I am proud to say that Krško nuclear power plant passed the European stress tests with flying colours and is one of the safest nuclear power plants in Europe. Immediately after the Fukushima accident, Krško nuclear power plant adopted a programme for further improvements, which are being executed as we speak and will be finished by 2016. With this we will make our nuclear power plant even safer and more prepared for the future.

To conclude let me say that Slovenia is very supportive to increased efforts taken in nuclear safety after Fukushima case. I believe that nuclear energy will stay an important energy source in the 21st century lies in the effort we are making today and the effort we will make in the future.

So, let's make this effort.

Thank you for your attention.