



CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY !

**Statement by Ambassador Barbara Žvokelj,
Permanent Representative of Slovenia to the IAEA,
at the meeting of the IAEA Board of Governors,
on the Safety, security and safeguards implications of the situation in Ukraine
(Agenda item 1)**

Vienna, 2 March 2022

Mr. Chairperson,

In addition to what has been said on behalf of the European Union by the French Ambassador, I would like to make several short comments in my national capacity.

Mr. Chairperson,

First of all, I would like to thank Canada and Poland for their timely call to hold this extraordinary meeting of the Board of Governors. The situation is extraordinary indeed.

Slovenia condemns in strongest possible terms the unprovoked and unjustified military aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine, which should stop immediately. Russia has violated international law and has shown disregard for our shared principles. We deem this an ill decision of the Russian leadership, and not of its people.

Mr. Chairperson,

My country is gravely concerned by the nuclear threats caused by the Russian invasion and the consequent nuclear safety, security and safeguards risks. The Russian Armed Forces have seized control over the Chernobyl NPP, and allegedly positioned multi-rocket launch systems in its vicinity. In addition to this, missiles have already hit a radioactive waste disposal site in Kyiv.

With this in mind we underline that the decision adopted by the IAEA General Conference in 2009 deems any armed attack on and threat against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes a violation of the principles of the UN Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency. In addition to this, the General Conference Resolution 533 states that an armed attack or a threat of armed attack on a safeguarded nuclear facility, in operation or under construction, would create a situation in which the UN Security Council would have to act upon immediately.

Mr. Chairperson,

The incidents relating to nuclear facilities in Ukraine we have witnessed until now, are indicative of the very real risk of potentially severe consequences for human health and the

environment. We cannot but echo the IAEA Director General's strong appeal to refrain from any military or other action that could threaten the safety and security of these facilities.

Mr. Chairperson,

My country has hoped, that it will remain the only one who would ever have to respond to difficult questions arising from having nuclear infrastructure in the middle of an area of military operations. In 1991, when Slovenia proclaimed its independence, our Krško NPP was the first NPP to be threatened by air strikes and was consequently subjected to a cold shutdown.

For this reason, Slovenia cannot take the situation in Ukraine lightly and therefore fully supports the resolution put forward for adoption by the IAEA Board of Governors.

Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.