



European Union

Statement on the occasion of the IAEA Board of Governors Vienna, 15-20 June 2020

Agenda Item 3: Strengthening of the Agency's technical cooperation activities

Madam Chair,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The following countries align themselves with this statement: [Turkey[§], The Republic of North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Iceland*, Serbia*, Albania*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Liechtenstein*, Norway*, Ukraine, The Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and San Marino.]
2. *The EU wishes to thank Director General Grossi for his Report contained in document GOV/2020/19 and its Supplement. We also thank the Secretariat for the technical briefing held on 3 June, as well as DDG Dazhu Yang for his introductory remarks.*
3. We reiterate our strong support and political commitment to the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme (TCP) and the activities carried out under its framework. We fully recognize the role of the IAEA in promoting safe, secure and sustainable use of nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes in all of its technical fields and the valuable contribution of the technical cooperation in this respect. Today, as we all continue to tackle this unprecedented crisis caused by the global Covid-19 pandemics, the TC programme has yet again proven to be an important and indispensable tool in assisting Member States to strengthen their capacities and helping to curb the spread of the virus. This is one of many examples how nuclear technologies can make life-changing contributions to the health and well-being of people across the world.
4. Turning into the IAEA activities conducted under the TC umbrella in 2019, we are pleased to see that the Agency continued to focus on enhancing the efficiency, effectiveness and results based delivery of the TCP to maximize programme impact and address the specific needs of Member States. We call upon the TC Department and all technical Departments to continue their efforts to reinforce their cooperation and coordination, when designing and delivering TC projects, with a view to further enhancing the quality of the TCP. We also commend the TC Department for its continued focus on developing a targeted approach to human resources and capacity building as a two of the most important components and a cross-cutting

[§] Candidate Country

* Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

*Iceland, Norway and Liechtenstein are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

priority of the TCP in each of its Fields of Activity (FoAs). In this regard, we renew our call to continue advancing gender mainstreaming and gender balance in all TC activities and to bolster the participation of women in every area of the TCP.

5. The EU and its Member States welcome the IAEA's continuous active involvement in the global dialogue on the 2030 Agenda highlighting its contribution to Member States' efforts to achieve the SDGs, including at the 2019 UN High Level Political Forum (HLPF), the SDG Summit and the Climate Action Summit held under the UNGA auspices last year in New York. We encourage the Agency to keep up its efforts in identifying interlinkages and aligning the TCP with the SDGs and support its efforts in raising awareness on the role of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
6. With respect to the thematic distribution of resources, we consider the share of the TCP in 2019 as balanced, well reflecting the demands of Member States and respective TC regions. We call on the Secretariat to continue to respond to Member States' needs and priorities in a transparent and non-discriminatory manner. We welcome the adoption of a Strategic Framework for Technical Cooperation in the Europe region for 2019-2025. As for the thematic area of Safety and Security, the EU and its Member States consider that the TCP should continue to give the appropriate emphasis on this field of activity in order to continue strengthening global nuclear safety and security regime and enhance the implementation of international safety standards and security guidance as a key element for the peaceful use of nuclear energy.

Madam Chair,

7. We encourage the Secretariat in its efforts to conduct systematic evaluation of the TCP through comprehensive outcome monitoring, based upon verifiable indicators to assess results, impact and sustainability of the projects. We also encourage the Secretariat to strengthen its strategic approach in the design phase of the TCP, through ex-ante assessment and quality assurance of project proposals, while respecting the demand driven nature of the Programme, so as to better allocate the available resources and maximise its value.
8. As highlighted by the OIOS in the common findings across evaluations completed by OIOS in 2019, improved efficiency gains, better internal integration and leveraged external partnerships, as well as strategic prioritization of value-added technical activities and approaches are crucial for an effective response to increasing and evolving demands from Member States, in a context of limited resources.
9. A timely and full implementation of OIOS recommendations is indeed essential to ensure operational efficiency and programme effectiveness. We reiterate the importance for the TC Department to continue working closely with the OIOS to address all TC-related recommendations, including those on the TC's outcome monitoring approach, which will contribute to consolidate the reporting mechanisms of the resources actually used and the overall governance and accountability of the TCP.
10. With respect to the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT), while we positively take note of the improvements in the methodology of imPACT Reviews to be applied as of 2020, we look forward to receiving an update on the implementation of the new "Unified Approach for Cancer Control", as outlined in

document GOV/INF/2019/2, as well as on measures taken to strengthen results-based management and other key-management systems.

Madam Chair,

11. The EU and its Member States continue to support the Agency in facilitating the participation of Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in the TCP. We welcome the development of a cross-regional strategy for the TCP to enhance the collaborative utilization of institutional resources in LDCs as well as the ongoing focus on building human and institutional capacities. We regret to note that, once again, neither the Report nor its Supplement include any additional detailed information on TCP disbursements in LDCs and SIDS.
12. Country Programme Frameworks (CPFs) are essential to achieve successful technical cooperation between Member States and the Agency. We note with appreciation that by the end of 2019, 25 countries had signed CPFs, bringing the total number of valid CPFs to 110 (an increase of 10 per cent since 2018). We also appreciate that 22 of them were prepared in line with a new format that contains a more concise and focused medium-term programme plan and that simplifies the establishment of clear linkages with national development priorities and with the SDGs. We encourage the Agency to continue these efforts, including by strengthening its participation in the United Nations Sustainable Development Cooperation Framework and enhancing partnerships with other UN entities, within the broader framework of the international development agenda.
13. We would like to highlight the modernisation of the Seibersdorf laboratories done under the ReNuAL project and their key role in ensuring the IAEA's ability to respond effectively to the demands of Member States, including in the situations we have faced during these past months. We are pleased to see that the third major facility under the ReNuAL project was opened on 5 June and named in honour of late DG Yukiya Amano. The work will continue with the enhancement of the three remaining labs. We appreciate the financial contributions made so far, however, as some additional extra-budgetary support is still needed, we encourage Member States in a position to do so, to contribute.

Madam Chair,

14. Contributing a share of €23 Million out of a total of €81 Million in 2019, means we remain the largest contributor to the TCF. Along with substantial extra budgetary contributions and extensive support in providing experts and hosting trainees, this confirms the EU and its Member States' continued support and commitment to the TCP. We therefore pay particular attention to the governance of the TCF, and welcome the financial overview provided in the TC Report supplement.
15. We note with appreciation that the rate of attainment of payments to the TCF has increased to 94%. We continue to encourage all Member States to pay their voluntary share, and to consider government cost sharing of their national projects.
16. The EU and its Member States recall the agreement reached on the strengthening of the Due Account Mechanism as contained in GOV/2019/25 and look forward to its implementation for the 2020-2021 TC cycle.

17. An additional concern remains the timely use of our contributions, which is reflected by the rate of implementation, which has increased in 2019 to 89.1%. We understand that TC is managed as a fund, and not as an annual budget. Nevertheless, as a matter of transparency, we still miss in the report a detailed breakdown of the 2019 adjusted unallocated balance.
18. With these comments, the EU and its Member States take note of the report as contained in document GOV/2020/19.

Thank you, Madam Chair.