

**Introductory Remarks**  
**STANDING ADVISORY GROUP ON**  
**TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATION**  
**(SAGTAC)**

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Thank you Mr Chairman.

It is a pleasure for me to be here this morning, to take part in this opening session of SAGTAC along with my fellow DDsG from the Departments of Nuclear Energy, and Nuclear Science and Applications.

### **The Role of the Agency and the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security**

The role of the Agency, and particularly of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security in cooperation with the Department of Technical Cooperation, is to assist Member States in developing the uses of nuclear technology in a **safe, secure and sustainable** way.

As you all know, radioactive sources are everywhere in use in the fields of medicine, agriculture, industry, and research. For us it is extremely important that they are properly used and controlled everywhere in the world. I vividly remember three years ago, when a group of doctors specialised in the treatment of severe irradiations occurring through improper manipulation of radioactive sources presented their work to the Agency. They intervene quite often (too often alas) after the Agency has received a request for assistance through the Incident and Emergency Center (IEC). They showed disturbing pictures of the severe radiological burns of their patients. I told them that my job was to make them out of their job. This has not happened yet. But we are working on it.

Our best tool in the Agency to strengthen nuclear safety and security in Member States is to use, strengthen, and support all of the components of the global nuclear safety and security framework. It relies on Member State's infrastructure covering the users, the regulatory infrastructure, research and development and the scientific "fabric" in the country. This is complemented by regional infrastructure and networks.

When DG commented on the **shared role** of the Agency on climate change, I can say that the role of the Agency in Nuclear Safety and Security is **universally recognised as central**. The Director General is the depositary of key international legally binding instruments such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, and promotes non-legally binding instruments such as the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

The central role of the Agency was recognised and praised at the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security that we organised last July in Vienna. More than 1300 participants and some 30 ministers took part in the Conference.

The basic tools we maintain in the IAEA are safety standards and security guidance that we develop with the engagement of all Member States and with the participation of the principle stakeholders: Regulatory Bodies, Operators, Technical Support Organisations, and Vendors. However, standards are only effective inasmuch as they are effectively implemented in practice.

We work closely with the Department of Technical Cooperation to help provide for their application through peer reviews, advisory services, education and training or capacity building, and we foster nuclear knowledge networks, research, and cooperation and information exchange.

### **Working together**

To assist Member States in applying these standards and enable valuable experience and insights to be shared, our Department has developed a number of services to help Member States assess their national framework, and the Technical Cooperation Programme assists with their implementation. These services address all fields of nuclear safety and security, radiation protection, emergency preparedness and response. They cover the roles of the regulators, the operating organizations, Governments and Law enforcement, in short, all actors. They are all based on the request of Member States, and they bring together high level international experts.

Last year's SAGTAC had a very timely discussion on Enhancing TC Support to MSs radiation safety. Your observations contributed to subsequent discussions in a TC/NS Working Group that looked deeper into this matter and provided an important report two months ago which is now being followed-up by both Departments.

This is done through an excellent working relationship. We liaise and coordinate our work very closely, with particular consideration to the importance of the safety and security aspects of the technical cooperation support the Agency provides to its Member States...And I hope that together we shall succeed in making these doctors out of their job!

Thank you again for the opportunity to take part in this opening session and I wish you a very productive and successful meeting.