Joint statement - High-level meeting on the safety and security of civil nuclear facilities in armed conflicts

New York, 9 September 2022

We, the ministers of Foreign Affairs of Canada, France, Germany, Italy, the United Kingdom, Ukraine and senior officials from the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, the United States of America, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy wish to express our grave concern regarding the threats posed to the safety and security of nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes in Ukraine and their personnel, significantly raising the risk of a nuclear accident.

We wish to note the 2009 IAEA General Conference unanimous decision GC(53)/DEC/13 entitled "Prohibition of armed attack or threat of attack against nuclear installations, during operation or under construction" which recognised the importance attached to safety, security and physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes as well as IAEA General Conference resolutions GC(XXIX)/RES/444 and GC(XXXIV)/RES/533 regarding armed attacks or threats against nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes.

We underscore the importance of the IAEA Director General's "Seven Indispensable Pillars of Nuclear Safety and Security", outlined in his statement to the IAEA Board of Governors meeting on March 2-3, 2022.

These "Seven Indispensable Pillars of Nuclear Safety and Security", derived from existing IAEA nuclear safety standards and nuclear security guidance, are as follows:

1. The physical integrity of the nuclear facilities, whether it is reactors, fuel ponds, or radioactive waste stores, must be maintained;
2. All safety and security systems and equipment must be fully functional at all times;
3. The operating staff must be able to fulfil their respective safety and security duties, and have the capacity to make decisions free of undue pressure;
4. There must be secure off-site power supply from the grid for all nuclear sites;
5. There must be uninterrupted logistical supply chains and transportation to and from the sites;
6. There must be effective on-site and off-site radiation monitoring systems and emergency preparedness and response measures;
7. And finally, there must be reliable communications with the regulator and others.

We intend to continue to support the IAEA action in helping facilitate the implementation of these principles in Ukraine while fully respecting Ukraine's

sovereignty, including through the IAEA nuclear safety and security assistance plan for Ukraine.

We welcome the IAEA Support and Assistance Mission to Zaporizhzhya (ISAMZ) and commend the Director General and his team for their courage and determination in performing this important mission. We support efforts to maintain a continued IAEA presence at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) in order to support Ukraine, and stand ready to support the nuclear safety, security and safeguards objectives of the IAEA mission, as needed.

We emphasize that Russia's seizure and militarization of the ZNPP is the root cause of the current threats in the field of nuclear safety and security. We recall that the heightened risks of a nuclear incident will remain dangerously high as long as Russia remains present on the site of ZNPP. The Russian Federation must immediately withdraw its troops from within Ukraine's internationally recognized borders and respect Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Should the Russian Federation conduct any sham referenda within occupied territories of Ukraine, we reiterate that these would have no legal and political effect, including on the status of the ZNPP.

We welcome the Director General's work to follow up on his visit of September 1st and the proposals contained in his report. We reaffirm our support for resolution GOV/2022/58 adopted on September 15 by the IAEA Board of Governors.
We underline the importance of complying with international humanitarian law and renewing efforts aimed at the prompt reinforcing of the international framework relating to the protection of nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes including in armed conflicts.

As a first step, we stand ready to reaffirm the importance of these "Seven Indispensable Pillars of Nuclear Safety and Security" in appropriate fora, in particular at the IAEA and at the United Nations as appropriate.

In due time, we are also ready to review the lessons learned in Ukraine in order to help the IAEA and the international community to prepare for and respond to future events and anticipate new threats, such as cyber-attacks.