PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIA
TO THE UN, OSCE AND OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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 Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications (Agenda item 4),
Vienna, 14 September 2021

Madame Chairperson,

In addition to what has been said on behalf of the European Union, I would like to outline several national activities in this field.

Madame Chairperson,

Firstly, I would like to commend the DG and the Secretariat for preparing a comprehensive report of the Agency's activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications.

The international community has been seized with the COVID-19 pandemic for a second year and we have to recognize that many questions pertaining to it still have to be answered. We have to thoroughly prepare for future pandemics and we firmly believe the ZODIAC project can help us on the road to achieving this goal. For this reason, Slovenia nominated the national coordinator and the ZODIAC national laboratory (ZNL) early on.

Sustainable water management is in the forefront of addressing climate change and is deeply connected to the achievement of SDGs. My country appreciates the traditional cooperation with the Agency with regard to the use of isotope hydrology in managing water resources. In 2020, a project on improving water quality in vulnerable and shallow aquifers was concluded. Nuclear techniques were successfully utilized to identify water movement and enabled the optimization of water usage for fruit and vegetable production.

On another note, the Jožef Stefan Institute was one of the counterparts in a CRP on technologies for the verification of origin of dairy products in order to enhance global trade and food safety. With the support of the Joint FAO/IAEA Centre, a new technology was developed, which entails a combination of stable isotope and trace element 'fingerprinting' with multivariate statistics.

Madam Chair,

We are convinced that the guidance of the IAEA on all aspects of the research reactor life cycle is of utmost importance. The Slovenian TRIGA research reactor marked fifty-five years of operation in May 2021. Ageing management and preventative maintenance programmes were developed for the reactor. The safety requirements for the research reactor are now

mirroring the practices applicable for nuclear power plants, consequently the reactor is operating under the highest nuclear safety standards and is ready for long-term operation.

In conclusion *Madam Chair*, Slovenia fully supports Agency's activities in the field of nuclear science, technology and applications, as they address some of the world most pressing issues, from climate change and plastic pollution to cancer care. We can only subscribe to what DG Grossi conveyed to the speakers of parliament last week here in Vienna: nuclear technologies really do improve people's lives around the world.

Thank you, Madame Chairperson.