STATEMENT

BY

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at the High-Level Interactive Session
on Nuclear Safety and Security

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Excellencies, Mr Chairman, Distinguished Delegates,

Thank you very much for this remarkable opportunity to present to you some aspects of nuclear energy utilization as a sustainable, safe, secure, efficient and low-carbon source of electricity and Polish plans to introduce the nuclear power.

So far, NPPs have proven their value to the society elsewhere,

Today, over 30 countries in the world have benefited substantially from nuclear energy, since NPPs provide a large amount of base load electricity with the lowest electricity production costs of any large energy source. It has been instrumental in the nations’ economic success and their high standard of living over last 50 years.

Poland has recognized the role of nuclear energy and this is why the Polish Government made a decision to launch the nuclear power program in 2009. This decision was made mainly due to energy security reasons, to ensure the long-term electricity supply at rational costs, respecting at the same time the environment protection requirements.

The Fukushima NPP accident reminded the world that nothing is given forever. Even six months after this accident it is impossible to talk about the nuclear energy - without referring to initiatives to improve nuclear safety worldwide.

But we have to remember than even during these tragic days in March after the earthquake and tsunami, which destroyed many of conventional power plants, despite the Fukushima NPP accident over 40 nuclear units have been producing electricity in Japan protecting the country from the humanitarian disaster.

Many opponents of nuclear power try to use this case to call for changes in the energy policy. The world is presently vacillating between the sense of urgency to mitigate global warming on one hand and the nuclear phobia on the other one.

What I would like to stress is that the implementation of nuclear power in Poland, considered as an important element of diversification of domestic power generation sources, is one of the priorities of the energy policy for years to come, changing energy mix in the complementary way.

Poland is planning to build at least two Nuclear Power Plants of total capacity of 6000 MW up to 2030. Our objective is to start up the operation of the first reactor at the beginning of the third decade. This determination is caused by a challenging situation of our power sector highly dependent on coal, with generation assets getting older and with the obligation to meet the EU climate and energy package targets.

I have to admit, that construction of the first NPP is also considered as the greatest challenge in the history of the Polish energy market and in the whole post war economy, especially implementing such a project from scratch. Striving for success, we consider this project a nation-wide, multidimensional and a long-term one, contributing to the development of an innovative economy with the active participation of the domestic industry.

The initial stage of the nuclear sector development, calls for specific individual approach in terms of organization and legislation. The whole process is being developed in terms of the highest possible technical, managerial and communicational culture. And the primacy of a safe and secure operation of the nuclear facilities has to dominate over any other aspect of the energy production.

Preparatory works related to the implementation of nuclear power in Poland fully respect provisions of international and EU law, and being conducted in accordance with adequate guidelines and recommendations of the International Atomic Energy Agency and other international organizations and will be based on experience of their Member States.
Attaching the utmost importance to the high level of the nuclear safety worldwide we are aware that although safety is a national responsibility, it can have implications beyond national boundaries. So, the international cooperation on this issue is indispensable. That’s why nuclear related authorities should support any action aiming at increasing the nuclear safety and emergency preparedness, resulting finally in the increased population’ and environment safety and security.

One of the first attempts to assess the needs of the global safety regime after Fukushima is the United Nations study on the implications of the Fukushima accident. Let me express full support of its findings aiming at promoting international cooperation in order to enhance global nuclear safety, coordinating efforts to strengthen global nuclear safety by providing expertise and advice and promoting nuclear safety culture worldwide. But further actions to implement this goals are needed.

A good opportunity to continue such dialogue in this regard is the IFNEC Executive Committee meeting in Warsaw scheduled on next week. The International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation provides a forum for cooperation among participating countries to explore mutually beneficial approaches to ensure the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes proceeds in a manner that is efficient and meets the highest standards of safety, security, and non-proliferation.

Poland is proud to host and chair this meeting with its robust agenda focused on some of the key challenges facing us today. These includes also accessible financing for nuclear projects and services; infrastructure matters, such as human capital developments; and reliable front and back-end nuclear fuel services. The sharing of experience and lessons learned is beneficial to all countries within IFNEC.

One of the main responsibilities of the state determined to implement the nuclear power is to enforce requirements for nuclear safety addressed to the investor and to all members in the suppliers’ chain and also to ensure the efficient system of monitoring and executing these requirements by the strong, competent and independent regulatory body.

We have to remember on painful experience in the past. But being richer of these experience - we should follow the way of further nuclear power development. Having in mind especially, the growing demand for electricity, the role of nuclear energy in the fuel mix worldwide and its ecological impact, we simply can not afford to slow down the whole process.