



# Security Council

Seventy-seventh year

**9109**<sup>th</sup> meeting

Thursday, 11 August 2022, 3 p.m.

New York

*Provisional*

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*President:* Mr. Zhang Jun . . . . . (China)

*Members:*

Albania . . . . .	Mr. Hoxha
Brazil . . . . .	Mr. De Almeida Filho
France . . . . .	Mrs. Broadhurst Estival
Gabon . . . . .	Ms. Koumby Missambo
Ghana . . . . .	Ms. Opong-Ntiri
India . . . . .	Mrs. Kamboj
Ireland . . . . .	Ms. Moran
Kenya . . . . .	Mrs. Toroitich
Mexico . . . . .	Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez
Norway . . . . .	Mr. Kvalheim
Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Nebenzia
United Arab Emirates . . . . .	Mr. Abushahab
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Mr. Kariuki
United States of America . . . . .	Ms. Jenkins

## Agenda

Threats to international peace and security

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22-45875 (E)



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*The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.*

### Adoption of the agenda

*The agenda was adopted.*

### Threats to international peace and security

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representative of Ukraine to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I give the floor to Mr. Grossi.

**Mr. Grossi:** It is indeed a great pleasure to have this opportunity to brief the Security Council on the situation at the nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

As the Council knows, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has been actively assessing the situation at those facilities since the conflict began in February. Members may recall that I had an opportunity to report on the state of affairs back in March (see S/PV.8986). Since 24 February, the IAEA has activated its Incident and Emergency Centre, established regular contact with the Ukrainian authorities and closely monitored the situation at the facilities, as well as activities involving radioactive sources and nuclear material in Ukraine.

I have issued frequent, almost daily, updates on the IAEA website to ensure that everyone has updated information. I have also personally led two missions to provide assistance to Ukraine — one at the South Ukraine nuclear power plant in March and, subsequently, a second one at the Chernobyl site in April. The Agency has also been coordinating offers of assistance from our member States. It has facilitated the provision of equipment, monitored the radiation situation and provided personal protective equipment and radiation monitors. In total, to date, 12 member States have offered assistance.

The Agency and I, too, have been in frequent contact with both Ukraine and the Russian Federation to make sure that we have the clearest picture possible

of the evolving circumstances at this time. The Agency has conducted nine safeguards missions in Ukraine — at the South Ukraine nuclear power plant, the Rivne nuclear power plant, the Khmelnytskyi nuclear power plant and the Chernobyl site and Kyiv area — which are under IAEA safeguards, pursuant to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement that the Agency has with Ukraine. Those on-site inspections have enabled the Agency to fulfil its obligatory safeguards objectives.

Remote monitoring from IAEA headquarters of other nuclear power plants and the Chernobyl area are ongoing. Very recently, I had two teams at the Chernobyl site performing critical safeguards verification activities. The two expert missions to Ukraine, which I led personally, as I said, allowed us to see for ourselves the situation on the ground and provide technical assistance, that which was already given and that which is ongoing.

Of course, there are several humanitarian, political and legal issues, which are within the remit of the Security Council. However, as members very well know, our work focuses exclusively on the technical issues related to safety and security and the safeguards inspections in Ukraine.

Earlier in the year — and I also had an opportunity to recall this just a little more than a week ago as I addressed the ongoing Review Conference of the Parties to the NPT in New York — I outlined a number of indispensable pillars — seven of them — which are cardinal and crucial to ensuring safety and security. I will not list them all but, in general, they include crucial aspects dealing with the physical integrity of the plants, the off-site power supply, which, as members know, is indispensable for cooling systems in nuclear power plants, emergency preparedness measures and systems and so on. The issue is that all seven pillars have been compromised, if not entirely violated, at one point or another during this ongoing crisis.

Legally speaking, when it comes to attacks or the possibility of attacks on nuclear facilities, we do not work in a vacuum. The international community took a stance very early on against challenges of that kind. Additional Protocols I and II to the 1949 Geneva Conventions prohibit such attacks against, as they were referred to back in the day, nuclear electrical generating stations in armed conflict. Furthermore, there have been several resolutions adopted by the

IAEA General Conference. That is the framework that must be observed.

We are all aware — and today's briefing is taking place against this backdrop — that the situation at the nuclear facilities in Ukraine, in particular at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, has been deteriorating rapidly, to the point of becoming very alarming.

On 5 August, the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant was subjected to shelling, resulting in several explosions at within the site. Those explosions took place near the electrical switchboard of a 750-kilowatt external power supply that caused the shutdown of the electrical power transformer and two backup transformers. Consequently, one reactor unit was shut down and disconnected from the electrical grid. It is therefore clear that there is a direct link between these external intervention attacks and what is happening at the plant.

The emergency protection system of the affected unit was triggered, and diesel generators were set into operation to restore the power supply for that unit. As we speak, the unit remains disconnected from the grid.

There was also shelling in the area of the nitrogen-oxygen station at the plant. Firefighters quickly extinguished that fire; however, repairs must be assessed, evaluated and done.

On 6 August, one staff member of the Zaporizhzhya plant working in the area of the dry spent nuclear fuel storage facility in the vicinity was injured during a new episode of shelling, which also caused some physical damage. Additionally, Ukraine has reported to us that the plant staff have restricted access to the on-site emergency crisis centre.

As of today, the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant has limited access to off-site power — one external high-voltage line and one high-voltage backup line to the thermal power plant — due to the damage from the shelling to which I just referred.

In particular, I remain very concerned about the situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, and I reiterate that any military action that jeopardizes nuclear safety and security must stop immediately. Military actions near such a large nuclear facility could lead to very serious consequences. Even before these most recent events, I had already expressed great

concern about the extremely stressful and difficult conditions faced by the Ukrainian operating staff.

The Agency continues to monitor the situation to identify any potential implication that could arise at the facilities. Based on the most recent information, experts have preliminarily assessed that there is no immediate threat to nuclear safety as a result of the shelling or other military actions.

However, that could change at any moment. We certainly can all agree that any nuclear catastrophe would be unacceptable. Therefore, preventing it should be our overarching goal. We must all work together to prevent it. That is our duty and our common responsibility. In order to help achieve that, I ask that both sides cooperate with the IAEA and allow a mission to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant to proceed as soon as possible.

As has been said many times, this facility is currently in Russian-occupied territory, so it cannot be reached by travelling exclusively through Ukrainian-controlled territory. We need to continue to work pragmatically with the authorities of both countries in efforts to obtain access for our experts to the Zaporizhzhya plant. I am personally ready to lead such a mission, as I did for South Ukraine and Chernobyl, leading a team of experts from the IAEA. We have been preparing for this, and time is of the essence. I propose — I plead — for the mission to be given a green light as soon as possible.

Ever since the installation has been under the control of Russia, the IAEA has received information from Russia, as well as from Ukraine, indicating the state of the facility, its operation and the damage assessed. However, the contents of such statements are frequently contradictory. And, without a physical presence, the IAEA cannot corroborate some very important facts. It is the facts gathered during a site visit that are needed so that the IAEA can develop and provide an independent assessment of the nuclear safety and security risks.

Among other critical activities, what are we intending to do? We would assess the physical damage to the facilities. We would determine whether the main and backup safety and security systems are functional and evaluate the working conditions of the control-room staff. The mission to the site will also allow us to carry out urgent safeguard activities, such as verifying the status of the reactors and the inventories of nuclear

material, including fresh and spent fuel storage, where we currently have no remote data transfer of surveillance. Furthermore, we need to perform maintenance on all IAEA safeguards equipment in order to ensure their remote data transmission and the maintenance of continuity of knowledge, which is indispensable after leaving the facility.

I am convinced that admission to the Zaporizhzhya plant could be beneficial not only for the work of the IAEA and for the international community's assessment of what is going on, but also for the operators and regulators of the nuclear plant itself. The previous IAEA missions that I have mentioned on a couple of occasions — to South Ukraine and Chernobyl — were proof that being there, establishing the facts, is what is needed at the moment. Overall, I also believe that our own site presence will allow us to both carry out the technical activities I just described and also provide a stabilizing influence.

I want to underscore that the IAEA has been ready to undertake such a mission since June, when we were ready to go. Unfortunately, due to political factors and other considerations, it was not possible. We have seen what has happened over the past two months. We cannot allow such factors to delay us any longer.

I reiterate that military actions that have even the smallest potential to jeopardize nuclear safety or security at this nuclear installation must stop immediately. Those actions could lead to serious consequences. The IAEA is ready to help avert such an escalation of the crisis.

I want to thank the Secretary-General, who has been steadfast in his support for our mission. I had an opportunity to discuss with him in New York a few days ago following his statements of support, without which our work would be tremendously more difficult. I thank the Security Council for having given me this opportunity to say, and sometimes to reiterate, that this is a serious and grave hour, and the IAEA must be allowed to conduct its mission to Zaporizhzhya as soon as possible.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Grossi for his briefing.

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We thank Director General Grossi for his briefing.

We have repeatedly warned our Western colleagues that, if they do not talk sense into the Kyiv regime, it will take the most monstrous and reckless steps, the consequences of which will backfire far beyond Ukraine's borders. Unfortunately, that is exactly what is happening now. Kyiv's criminal attacks on nuclear infrastructure are pushing the world to the brink of a nuclear catastrophe, comparable in scale to that of Chernobyl.

In recent days, the Ukrainian armed forces repeatedly shelled the largest nuclear power plant in Europe, the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, with heavy artillery and multiple rocket launchers. Those strikes directly threaten the nuclear safety of the plant.

On 5 August, such a strike damaged a number of facilities important to the Zaporizhzhya plant's electricity and gas supply. Pipelines were destroyed; there was a hydrogen fire at the distribution unit; and a high-voltage power line was disabled. I would like to stress that the Ukrainian armed forces shelled the plant during a shift change of personnel. It is clear that the aim of the Kyiv regime was to intimidate the Zaporizhzhya plant's employees, its own citizens, to prevent them from going to work, thereby undermining the normal functioning of the facility.

On 6 August, the Ukrainian armed forces struck the Zaporizhzhya plant with cluster munitions. Their shrapnel warheads hit a site in the area of the dry storage facility for spent nuclear fuel, as well as an automated radiation monitoring post. One of the plant's employees was wounded.

As a result of the shelling by the Ukrainian armed forces on 7 August, there was a power surge in the mains supplying the Zaporizhzhya plant. There was damage to equipment, which led to an automatic shutdown of the power supply. At Unit 4, which was operating at 10-percent capacity, the power supply to the plant's protection control systems failed and the emergency protection was triggered. Ukrainian Zaporizhzhya plant personnel were forced to shut down one of the three operating power units, while the capacity of two other units was reduced to half the maximum.

Heavy strikes by the Ukrainian armed forces in the vicinity of Enerhodar caused more than 40 power lines to be severed and the town to lose power. Among the

residents of Enerhodar, many of whom are employees of the Zaporizhzhya plant, there are fatalities and injuries. It is particularly despicable that a number of attacks on the plant were carried out at night, when people were sleeping.

Today the attacks of the Ukrainian armed forces on the Zaporizhzhya plant and Enerhodar continued. The strikes were carried out using multiple-launch rocket systems and heavy artillery from the right bank of the Dnipro River, the Dnipropetrovsk region, Nikopol, Marhanets and Tomakivka, controlled by Kyiv. According to the regional administration, the Ukrainian armed forces are aiming missiles at concrete radioactive-waste storage facilities. So far, Kyiv has failed to hit them and cause serious damage. The radiation level at the Zaporizhzhya plant is currently normal. But if the strikes continue, it is only a question of time. We regularly send reports to the secretariat of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) detailing the situation and such incidents.

What is currently happening at the Zaporizhzhya plant is the culmination of the criminal actions of the Kyiv regime against nuclear infrastructure and the personnel who maintain those facilities, which for months remained without any international reaction.

Between April and July, Kyiv committed a number of provocative acts against the Zaporizhzhya plant using strike unmanned aerial vehicle, including Polish-made ones. Some were successfully shot down; others, bomb-laden kamikaze drones, were detonated near critical infrastructure. It was only by sheer luck that this did not lead to a disruption of the plant's normal operation.

Earlier, in February, Ukrainians captured four Russian specialists who were accompanying the delivery of nuclear fuel to the Rovno nuclear power plant. They were subjected to intimidation and pressure, in line with classic methods in the arsenal of terrorist groups.

On 9 March, Ukrainian saboteurs blew up a power transmission line feeding the cooling system of the storage facility for spent nuclear fuel at the Chornobyl nuclear power plant. It was only thanks to the efforts of the Russian military that the accident was avoided by urgently connecting diesel generators and providing electricity to the plant via an alternative power line from the territory of Belarus. The sabotage group also blew up the only bridge that connected the plant to the town where the power plant engineers live. Shift personnel could not go to work for a long time. At the

same time, they were being worked on by the Ukrainian special services, threatening them with reprisals for cooperating with the so-called occupiers. In Kyiv, at that time, crocodile tears were publicly being shed, and it was reported to the IAEA that the Russian military was preventing the rotation of maintenance shifts.

At the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, currently taking place in New York, representatives of the Kyiv regime, with the support of a number of other delegations, are cynically and absurdly accusing Russia of attacks on the Zaporizhzhya plant. Such propagandistic spin is picked up by the Western press. All that is being done contrary to common sense, since the Zaporizhzhya plant is controlled by the Russian armed forces. Elementary logic suggests that our military has no reason to shell the plant, the city or themselves.

On 4 March, Western countries already convened a Security Council meeting (see S/PV.8986) on the issue of the Zaporizhzhya plant, trying to present the Ukrainian sabotage — the arson of the training-centre building — as the result of the actions of the Russian military despite the fact that the plant was under their complete control by that time. Let me recall that, at the time, Under-Secretary-General DiCarlo said that attacks on nuclear facilities violated international humanitarian law. The representative of Great Britain said that international law indicated the need for special protection for nuclear facilities. The representative of the United States of America said that, by the grace of God, the world had averted a nuclear catastrophe, that the attack on the plant was extremely reckless and that conflicts should not involve nuclear facilities. The representative of France argued that it was necessary to ensure the safety of nuclear power plants. Are members ready to repeat all that now in relation to the Ukrainian side and to call on Kyiv to stop the shelling?

I want to emphasize that every time the Ukrainian armed forces struck at the Zaporizhzhya plant, a catastrophe was avoided only thanks to the selfless joint actions of plant employees and Russian military personnel, who provided them with comprehensive emergency assistance. When necessary, firefighters and emergency crews, as well as our military personnel, work hand in hand. That clearly shows that absolutely normal communication has been established between our military and Ukrainian specialists at the plant.

From the very beginning, we have supported the IAEA's efforts to ensure the nuclear safety and security of Ukraine's nuclear facilities. It was assumed that the seven principles formulated by Director General Grossi in that area would form the basis of a trilateral document in the Russia-Ukraine-IAEA format. However, the Kyiv regime refused to sign it. Then we showed flexibility and agreed that such an agreement should be formalized in the form of two parallel agreements — Russia with the IAEA and Ukraine with the IAEA. Kyiv also rejected that option, without giving any clear arguments about the reasons for the refusal. However, their reasoning is clear. Even then, dangerous plans had been hatched in Kyiv to disrupt the normal functioning of the Zaporizhzhya and Chornobyl nuclear power plants and to blame Russia for it.

We strictly adhere to the seven principles mentioned earlier and do our best to ensure that the representatives of the Agency can be convinced of that with their own eyes.

As early as 3 June, the Russian side and the leadership of the IAEA secretariat fully agreed on the route and schedule of the Agency's international mission to the Zaporizhzhya plant. The IAEA Director General, Mr. Grossi, personally planned to lead the mission, which included prominent experts from a number of countries. The mission was assigned exclusively technical tasks and was to fulfil the IAEA's mandate to assess the state of Europe's largest nuclear power plant and make an inventory of the nuclear material located there, as stipulated by the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

In the closest cooperation with the Agency, we managed to resolve all the difficult issues related to the organization and conduct of such a complex event in the current circumstances. However, at the last minute, the Department of Safety and Security at the Secretariat gave a red light, and the trip was cancelled, and that was seized upon by the Kyiv authorities to step up their provocations and shelling of the nuclear power plant.

We are convinced that cancelling the international mission played into the hands of the Kyiv regime and its Western backers, who initially were opposed to the idea of the trip. They did not want the IAEA to see that the nuclear power plant was functioning normally and that the staff was working in a healthy and normal environment.

We hope that the visit of IAEA experts to the Zaporizhzhya plant will happen soon. We also hope that in this situation the Secretary-General will acknowledge the full weight of his responsibility and will not, via the Secretariat department subordinate to him or any other links in the United Nations system, do anything to hinder this mission from being conducted.

For our part, we stand ready to provide all possible assistance to resolving all organizational matters. We believe that there is justification for IAEA representatives to go to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant as quickly as possible, possibly even before the end of August. However, not everything depends on us. At this time, we cannot provide any guarantees that the trip will take place. It is hard for us to judge what is currently being cooked up by the Ukrainian leadership, which for several days in a row has been launching strikes on the nuclear power plant, even though the Secretary-General described any attacks on nuclear facilities as suicide.

We believe that it is unacceptable that the IAEA mission should take place in conditions of ongoing shelling by Ukrainian armed forces of the plant and the territory around the town of Enerhodar. Kyiv must immediately cease and guarantee that it has no intention of presenting any threat to the life and health of international staff.

We call on States that support the Kyiv regime to bring their proxies into check, compel them to immediately and once and for all stop attacks on the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and the residents of Enerhodar, and ensure safe conditions for the conduct of the IAEA mission. We call on the leadership of the United Nations and the IAEA to demonstrate their leadership and global responsibility and very precisely and without diplomatic rhetoric indicate the real source of the threat to nuclear security of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, namely, the strikes by the Ukrainian armed forces, and to tell the Ukrainian authorities that such actions are unacceptable. This is the only way to prevent a major radiation catastrophe on the European continent, the risk of which is now more real than ever.

If Ukrainian armed forces attacks continue, such a disaster could take place at any time, and the threat of radiation contamination would loom over the territories of Kyiv, Zaporizhzhya, Kharkiv, Poltava, Kherson, Odesa, Mykolayiv, Kivorhrad and Vinnytsia oblast, as well as the Donetsk People's Republic and the Luhansk People's Republic, the border regions of Russia

and Belarus, and Moldova, Bulgaria and Romania, and that is according to the most optimistic expert forecasts. The real scale of a nuclear disaster at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant is hard to imagine. Full responsibility for such an event would lie upon the Western backers of Kyiv.

**Ms. Oppong-Ntiri** (Ghana): Let me begin by thanking Mr. Rafael Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his briefing on the deeply concerning situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in Ukraine. The information provided confirms our fears of a growing risk of a potential nuclear incident with catastrophic consequences for human lives and their environment if the indiscriminate shelling of the facility does not cease forthwith.

Ghana unequivocally condemns the militarization of the precinct of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, as well as the deliberate attacks on the power lines and sensitive units of the facility. It appears that the attacks are taking place with no due regard to the deadly consequences that these unacceptable actions could lead to, particularly the accidental emission of radioactive material. We also call for the unconditional withdrawal and removal of all military personnel and equipment and insist on the return of the facility to its accredited personnel.

We welcome the public pronouncement of Secretary-General António Guterres with regard to the rapidly developing grave situation and hereby fully endorse his call for immediate access to be granted to international inspectors from the IAEA so as to enable an independent assessment of the nuclear facility's standards and safeguards. Under no circumstances should nuclear facilities intended for peaceful purposes be subjected to such attacks. We call for the immediate and full respect for the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 amendment by all armed parties.

The world can ill afford another nuclear disaster. We cannot too soon forget the horrors of the 1986 Chernobyl accident and the consequent nuclear catastrophe, which left in its wake the long-term effects of radiation exposure to many people in Ukraine and parts of Europe even to date. The warnings of the IEAE must therefore be soberly reflected on by the Security Council and should galvanize its members to quickly deploy every effort in a unified manner to assist the

IAEA to mitigate and suppress any risk of accidental emissions at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear facility.

Ghana believes that, ultimately, the cessation of the military hostilities, anchored in a complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Russian Federation troops from the internationally recognized borders of Ukraine, is the only acceptable pathway to the restoration of the peace and security of that country. In this regard, we continue to strongly urge a pacific settlement of the substantive security concerns of the parties in line with the United Nations Charter and appeal to all other actors to refrain from escalatory actions and activities that seek only to prolong the war, perpetuate the tensions and aggravate the security concerns of the parties.

As this senseless war lingers on, civilians are bearing innumerable hardships, and human lives are being lost every day. It is important for the parties to exercise restraint and halt the use of force in all areas where there is critical infrastructure, including nuclear power plants, and to respect their international obligations to protect human lives and prevent a potential disaster.

Undeniably, the war in Ukraine continues to have devastating consequences beyond the battlefield. The rippling effects, combined with economic disruptions caused by the coronavirus disease pandemic, have contributed to constraining the fiscal space of many Governments and led to spiralling food prices that threaten to push millions into acute hunger and roll back development gains. The situation of developing countries appears to be dire and requires urgent actions on a global scale, including debt forgiveness and restructuring to assist these countries navigate the current volatile global economic environment and preserve their stability. It is hoped that, together with the international community, the Security Council could explore new support measures and appropriate responses to protect vulnerable populations in States Members of the United Nations.

I conclude by expressing Ghana's strong support for the peaceful resolution of this conflict sooner rather than later. We urge further constructive engagement by the parties at all levels in the pursuit of their security interests and the maintenance of international peace and security.

**Ms. Jenkins** (United States of America): I thank Director General Grossi for his briefing on the situation

at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in Ukraine. We welcome the steadfast commitment of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to addressing the situation there and to nuclear safety worldwide.

The United States continues to closely monitor reports on the situation at the Zaporizhzhya facility, noting the considerable concern with regard to the risk of a nuclear incident that would endanger the people of Ukraine, neighbouring States and the international community. The cause of the situation at the Zaporizhzhya facility is not a mystery. It is another tragic result of the Russian Federation's decision to further invade its sovereign neighbour, Ukraine. To date, Russia's full-scale invasion has resulted in thousands of civilians being killed or wounded and has violated the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. The full-scale invasion has also contributed to a spike in global food insecurity, driven energy-market volatility and now heightened the risk of a catastrophic nuclear incident with consequences that could be felt in Ukraine and far beyond.

It is especially galling that Russia's actions are taking place during the ongoing Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which is being held just down the hall from where we sit. Russia's behaviour could not more directly undercut the shared interests of the States parties in strengthening non-proliferation, disarmament and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The solution for what is happening at the Zaporizhzhya facility is straightforward. The United States calls for the Russian Federation to immediately withdraw its forces from Ukraine's territory. That would allow for Ukraine to restore the impeccable safety, security and safeguards performance it upheld for decades at the facility.

Russia continues to deploy disinformation to distract from the realities on the ground — and now claims that Ukraine is culpable for the situation at the Zaporizhzhya facility. That completely ignores the real issue, which is Russia's illegal presence at the facility. Russia alone created the risks, and with it launched a full-scale invasion. It can eliminate those risks now by withdrawing from Ukraine.

In the absence of such a withdrawal, however, there are steps we must now take to minimize the risks. To start, the United States reiterates the importance of facilitating access for IAEA personnel to address nuclear safety, security and safeguards concerns at the Zaporizhzhya facility, as well as at other nuclear

facilities across the country, in a manner that respects Ukrainian sovereignty. That visit cannot wait any longer. We once again call on Russia to cease all military operations at or near Ukraine's nuclear facilities. We insist that Russia immediately return full control of the Zaporizhzhya facility to Ukraine.

We are also aware of claims of mistreatment of the power plant's Ukrainian staff by Russian soldiers and note that, if true, such treatment would be inconsistent with the IAEA's seven pillars of nuclear safety and security, which Russia has endorsed. Ukrainian staff must be allowed to fulfil their important duties free from the pressure of Russia's armed forces. The United States also supports Ukraine's proposal to create a demilitarized zone around the Zaporizhzhya plant. Reports such as those by the IAEA we heard today underscore the urgency of the situation. However, what is happening at this nuclear power plant is not the only alarming situation we face in the areas where Russia's forces operate in Ukraine.

Russia has expanded its aims in Ukraine and seeks to dismantle it as a geopolitical entity, dissolving it from the world map. We are now getting a clearer picture of what life is like in an area under Russian military control. Through intimidation, censorship and propaganda, Russia is clearly laying the foundation to try, once again, to illegally annex territory from its neighbour. None of us should be surprised if Russia suddenly announces false referendums in those regions as a pretext to grabbing more of Ukraine's sovereign territory.

The many consequences of the conflict, including the situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, will end only when Russia ends the war. Today the United States demands particularly urgent action to address the nuclear risks posed by Russia's most recent moves. That must be done through the work of the IAEA and the return of full control of the Zaporizhzhya facility to Ukraine.

**Ms. Koumby Missambo (Gabon)** (*spoke in French*): I thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Rafael Grossi, for his briefing.

First of all, I would like to express my country's serious concerns about the escalation of fighting and the perpetuation of the war in Ukraine. Since last Saturday, following the attack on the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, there is now the considerable risk



of a nuclear disaster, given the non-compliance with five of the seven pillars of nuclear safety and security.

The build-up of military activity around the nuclear plant must stop. The parties are responsible for ending any activity that could expose the world to the risk of a nuclear disaster. Any militarization of nuclear sites is unacceptable. The scale of risks involved should be cause for concern for the warring parties and for the international community as a whole. We urge the parties to comply with current nuclear security rules, halt all shelling of nuclear sites and avoid exposing the world to the risk of a disaster with irreparable consequences.

My country calls on the parties to cooperate with the IAEA to secure potentially dangerous sites in order to prevent the risk of a nuclear disaster. Furthermore, the 174 containers of spent nuclear fuel must be sheltered from military activity of any kind. In that regard, an on-site IAEA technical mission appears to be crucial. We call on the parties to agree on the modalities of such a mission, which, in the light of the situation that has just been described, is critical.

The signing of an agreement just a few weeks ago to allow grain held at Ukrainian ports to be exported is a glimmer of hope on the path towards peace. That momentum should be harnessed in preparation for negotiations on a ceasefire and the end of hostilities.

My country reiterates its opposition to war and reaffirms its commitment to a peaceful resolution of conflict. We encourage all political and diplomatic efforts aimed at ending the escalation and brokering an agreement for lasting peace between the parties.

**Mr. Abushahab** (United Arab Emirates): I would like to thank Director General Grossi for his valuable briefing.

The United Arab Emirates is deeply alarmed by recent events at and near the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, including the reported damage to critical infrastructure, the external power supply system and radiation sensors. Those developments illustrate the disastrous ramifications of the ongoing conflict, not just for Ukraine but for the wider region and the world. When it comes to nuclear matters, our collective security is truly intertwined. A miscalculation, mistake or reckless act could result in a humanitarian and environmental catastrophe that would affect millions of lives.

In that context, it is crucial that the International Atomic Energy Agency have full, unimpeded access to the site in order to assess the damage and ascertain the safety of the facility. We support the seven pillars of nuclear safety and security, outlined by Director General Grossi at the beginning of March, and remind the parties of their importance in maintaining the safe operation of the Zaporizhzhya plant and other facilities that may be caught up in the conflict.

Furthermore, we recall the special protections for nuclear power facilities under international law, including article 56 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions, which makes clear that works or installations containing dangerous forces, including nuclear generating stations, shall not be made the object of attack, even where those objects are military objectives. Those facilities are protected under international law for a reason: not only are they critical civilian infrastructure, but there are also immense risks to human life when nuclear facilities become vulnerable due to conflict. Ensuring the safety of nuclear facilities is therefore of the utmost importance and is a critical issue for the United Arab Emirates.

With the signing of the agreement on agricultural exports, we witness the potential for positive developments when backed by active and involved diplomacy and broad international support. The high stakes of nuclear safety and security and the international community's manifest concern should therefore make that a focus of constructive and necessary engagement between the parties. Those efforts, in turn, can pave the path for a broader settlement that ends this devastating conflict. We therefore reiterate the need for ongoing dialogue to bring the conflict to a peaceful, sustainable resolution in a way that is consistent with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

We re-emphasize the importance of achieving a cessation of hostilities throughout Ukraine. The alarming developments at the Zaporizhzhya plant underline the urgency of finding a diplomatic end to this conflict, which continues to cause a staggering humanitarian crisis in Ukraine. Despite the difficulties facing the Council, we must work towards fulfilling its mandate and take incremental and pragmatic steps to prevent further suffering.

**Mr. Kvalheim** (Norway): Let me start by thanking Director General Grossi for his briefing, including by providing frequent factual updates on matters within

the mandate of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The Director General has outlined seven indispensable pillars for nuclear safety and security. We note with great distress that the Russian forces have violated several of them during their military aggression against Ukraine. Norway strongly condemns Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine, which has gone on for half a year.

In March, the IAEA Board of Governors adopted a resolution deploring the Russian Federation's forcefully seizing control of the nuclear facilities. The Board expressed

“grave concern that the Russian Federation's aggression is impeding the Agency from fully and safely conducting safeguards verification activities at Ukrainian nuclear facilities”.

We call on Russia to return full control of all Ukrainian nuclear facilities to their Ukrainian operators.

The ongoing war has disrupted direct communication lines between them and the Ukrainian regulator. That is extremely dangerous. Nuclear safety and security deteriorate from the presence of an armed aggressor. The staff operating the facilities are under psychological and physical stress, and they are at the mercy of an invading force. That is not conducive to the safe operation of nuclear facilities.

Norway has had long-standing cooperation with Ukraine on nuclear safety and security, and we commend Ukraine for its commitment and dedication to ensuring the continuation of nuclear safety and security in the country under these severe circumstances.

Damage to, and destruction of, civilian infrastructure is unacceptable. It must always be protected in accordance with international humanitarian law. We are concerned that Russia's occupation of nuclear power plants in Ukraine also means seizing control over the central sources of electricity for the Ukrainian civilian population.

In conclusion, Norway again underlines that the Russian Federation's must immediately withdraw its forces from Ukraine's internationally recognized borders and cease all threats and military actions. That would restore Ukraine's abilities to ensure safe and secure operations at nuclear facilities.

**Mr. De Almeida Filho (Brazil):** I thank Director General Grossi for his clear and comprehensive briefing.

Brazil has been following with great concern news about recent shelling incidents at the facilities of Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant in Ukraine. As unanimously recognized by the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), any armed attack on, or threat against, nuclear facilities devoted to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the Statute of the Agency. We reiterate that all parties concerned have a responsibility to ensure compliance with the applicable instruments on nuclear safety and security, including the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment.

During the ongoing Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, the States parties have been insisting on the need to promote nuclear safety and security, as well as to reduce risk. The urgency of translating those words into action is increasingly evident.

While the IAEA assessment that there was no immediate threat to nuclear safety as a result of Saturday's incident give us some relief, we cannot lose sight of the fact that recent events have breached virtually all the seven pillars outlined by Director General Grossi earlier this year. The absence of an immediate threat does not mean the absence of a threat; it means only that the parties still have a chance to avoid a disaster.

What makes the situation so alarming is precisely the fact that we are fully aware of the catastrophic and lasting consequences for human health and the environment that any damage to the Zaporizhzhya power plant would entail. We therefore call on all parties to refrain from any measure that could jeopardize the safety and security of the nuclear power plant, as well as its safe operation.

As Director General Grossi stated recently, the current situation is untenable. We echo the calls for the deployment of an IAEA expert mission to the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant without delay.

**Mr. Hoxha (Albania):** We thank Mr. Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy

Agency (IAEA) for his information, clarifications and leadership.

He was crystal clear during his address at the general debate of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), which is still under way, as he was today: the IAEA should be fully involved everywhere in Ukraine in order to help prevent a nuclear disaster there. He must be listened to, and his request must be met.

There would not be a meeting of the Security Council and we would not be discussing this issue were it not for the Russian invasion of Ukraine and if this unjustified and senseless war, which continues to this hour, had not started. We and the entire world are now familiar with its disastrous impact on every aspect of human life and activity, including — as feared more than once — increased nuclear risks, with potentially disastrous consequences.

Is it not ironic that, while the tenth NPT Review Conference is under way and the entire world hopes for tangible progress on the three pillars of the NPT, we meet, sadly, to talk about a persistent, serious risk and a nuclear plant in Ukraine that threatens not only Ukraine and its population, but also its neighbours, the European continent and beyond?

Let me recall one fundamental fact that is much more than a curiosity — until Russia's invasion of Ukraine, no nuclear plant had ever been attacked, overrun, occupied or reportedly militarized by an invading army. It is the first time that this has ever happened, as a result of Russia's war of choice, and it has created one of the worst precedents.

There is countless evidence that Russian forces continue to conduct their ugly war recklessly and with brutality. There is a legitimate concern, therefore, that Russian forces may directly or indirectly cause a serious or severe nuclear accident and take other actions that may result in the exposure of Ukraine's population to ionizing radiation, all while accusing the victims of the very same actions. Such dreadful concerns have been validated by the shelling of a nuclear research institute in Kharkiv as well as by overrunning and occupying Europe's biggest nuclear power station, in Zaporizhzhya.

In the course of the past six months of the war, Russia has carried out indiscriminate ground and air attacks on civilian infrastructure in residential areas,

causing thousands of innocent victims. Furthermore, cyberwarfare against targets in Ukraine, including electric-power-grid installations and systems, has reportedly been linked to Russian actors and interests.

Gaining full clarity of the situation concerning the power plant in Zaporizhzhya is critical, and that must be carried out through international eyes, meaning the IAEA missions.

Russia's actions constitute a serious and irresponsible breach of nuclear safety rules and are another example of its blatant disregard for international law and international norms. They undermine the IAEA's ability to monitor Ukraine's peaceful nuclear activities for safeguarding purposes.

As rightly stated recently by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of Seven, "it is Russia's continued control of the plant that endangers the region". Therefore, the longer the war continues, the greater the likelihood that additional nuclear challenges and risks may arise related to the need for equipment maintenance in Ukraine's nuclear energy programme and other related issues, which would normally not be conducted just because of the war.

Albania reiterates its full and continued support for the IAEA and for its staff to be able to access all nuclear facilities in Ukraine safely and without any impediment and to engage directly and without interference with the Ukrainian personnel responsible for the operation of those facilities. The safety of all individuals implementing those efforts must be addressed to strengthen nuclear safety, security and safeguards in Ukraine.

Albania condemns any act of violence perpetrated inside or near the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant or against its personnel. The Ukrainian personnel operating the plant under Russian occupation must be able to carry out their important tasks without restrictions, threats or pressure. Unfortunately, as we have seen, the seven safety pillars essential to maintaining nuclear safety and security, defined at the start of the war by the IAEA, have all been compromised at the Zaporizhzhya plant.

We reiterate our call on the Russian Federation to stop the war and immediately withdraw all its armed forces from Ukrainian nuclear facilities and from the entire Ukrainian territory.

Let me conclude, like other speakers — because it is important — by recalling what Director General Grossi has repeatedly said, including in the General Assembly:

“If an accident occurs at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, we will not have a natural disaster to blame. We will have only ourselves to answer to.”

Actually, we know who is to be blamed, but we hope that we will never come to that. For that reason, there is a need for concrete action, since inaction is unconscionable. Nuclear safety should not be compromised; it should not be politicized; and it should not be used for military tactical advantage. This is not the time for empty words, biased narratives or the blame game, but for the immediate and strict application of the IAEA safety procedures and protocols in Ukraine.

**Mrs. Kamboj** (India): Let me begin by thanking Director General Rafael Grossi for his update, focusing on the safety and security of nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

We continue to carefully follow developments regarding the safety and security of Ukraine’s nuclear power reactors and facilities. India attaches high importance to ensuring the safety and security of such facilities, as any accident involving nuclear facilities could potentially have severe consequences for public health and the environment.

We also accord a high priority to the discharge by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) of its safeguards and monitoring activities, in accordance with its Statute, in an effective, non-discriminatory and efficient manner, and we value the efforts of the Agency in that regard. We have noted the latest information available with regard to the nuclear power plants and facilities in Ukraine, including the updates published on 9 and 10 August by the IAEA, as well as today’s updates on the latest developments.

India expresses its concern over the reports of shelling near the spent-fuel storage facility of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. We call for mutual restraint so as not to endanger the safety and security of nuclear facilities.

India continues to remain concerned over the situation in Ukraine. Since the beginning of the conflict in Ukraine, India has consistently called for an immediate cessation of hostilities and an end to violence. We called on both sides to return to the path

of diplomacy and dialogue. We support all diplomatic efforts to end the conflict.

While we are discussing the nuclear dimension of this conflict, we also need to be acutely cognizant of the impact of the Ukraine conflict on developing countries, particularly on the supply of food grains, fertilizer and fuel. It is important for all of us to appreciate the importance of equity, affordability and accessibility when it comes to food grains. Open markets must not become an argument to perpetuate inequity and promote discrimination.

In that regard, we welcome the initiative, backed by the Secretary-General, to open the export of grain from Ukraine via the Black Sea and the facilitation of the exports of Russian food and fertilizers. Those efforts demonstrate that differences can be resolved through sustained dialogue and diplomacy, which has been the consistent position of India.

We continue to reiterate that the global order is anchored on international law, the Charter of the United Nations and respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of nation States.

**Mrs. Toroitich** (Kenya): I thank Mr. Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his briefing.

We are having this discussion against the backdrop of the tenth Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, taking place on these premises. The objective of the Treaty is to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament and general and complete disarmament.

We are all alive to the fact that the use of such weapons, whether intentional or accidental, can have an apocalyptic effect on humankind, biodiversity and the environment. Kenya therefore reaffirms its belief that the total elimination of nuclear weapons remains the only absolute guarantee against the use of or threat of use of nuclear weapons.

In that regard, we are deeply concerned by the reports of the shelling of Ukraine’s Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. Fully aware of the catastrophic effects of stray or deliberate targeting of such an installation, we note with relief that no damage was

caused to the reactors themselves, and neither was there any radiological release or reports of injuries.

We urge the need to safeguard the seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security, as echoed by the Director General. We further urge the parties to refrain from any military action that could jeopardize nuclear safety and security in Ukraine. It is also essential that the IAEA be allowed to send a mission of nuclear safety, security and safeguards experts to the site as soon as possible to conduct safeguards verification activities.

Beyond the dangers posed by an insecure nuclear power plant, Kenya remains gravely concerned about the unabated strikes and shelling in various parts of Ukraine. With no meaningful ceasefire in sight, this war continues to cause untold suffering to the Ukrainian people. It also threatens to usher in a new era of major global wars.

Kenya continues to call for the parties' restraint in taking any action that may further escalate the situation. We reiterate the need to shift focus to an immediate cessation of hostilities and the deployment of available diplomatic tools. Such a cessation should set the foundation for the negotiation of a lasting peace settlement that guarantees the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine while taking into consideration the security concerns of the Russian Federation.

Finally, I reaffirm Kenya's respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

**Mrs. Broadhurst Estival** (France) (*spoke in French*): I would like to thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for his briefing.

France is very concerned about the serious threat to the safety and security of Ukrainian nuclear facilities. The Zaporizhzhya plant, the largest in Europe, was forcibly seized by Russia last March as part of its unjustified and unjustifiable aggression against Ukraine. The presence and actions of Russian armed forces in the vicinity of the plant significantly increase the risk of an accident with potentially devastating consequences. Russia bears responsibility for this situation.

Russia must return full control of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, as well as all nuclear facilities in the country, to Ukraine. As the Secretary-General

stressed today, all military personnel and equipment must urgently be removed from the plant. Ukrainian personnel operating the plant must be allowed to carry out their duties without threat or pressure. Russian control of Ukrainian nuclear facilities is a danger — a danger to the Ukrainian people, a danger to the region and to the entire international community.

France welcomes and supports the efforts of the IAEA Director General, which it has supported from the outset and at a high level, in particular by actively contributing to his technical assistance plan for Ukraine. France recalls the importance of the Seven pillars of nuclear safety and security defined by the IAEA Director General. They must be respected. The IAEA's ability to monitor Ukraine's peaceful nuclear activities to ensure compliance with safeguards, which has also been compromised by Russia's actions, must also be restored.

For that reason, I would like to emphasize in this regard the importance of facilitating a mission of IAEA experts to the Zaporizhzhya plant. This mission must focus on nuclear safety and security and allow for the necessary safeguards inspections to be carried out. It must respect Ukraine's full sovereignty over its own territory and infrastructure.

In addition, IAEA personnel must have safe and unhindered access to all nuclear facilities in Ukraine. The Agency must be able to communicate directly — without interference — with the Ukrainian personnel responsible for operating these facilities.

France reiterates its unwavering support for the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders. Since 24 February, we have witnessed the devastating human cost of Russian aggression. Russia must immediately withdraw its troops from the territory of Ukraine. It must stop its dangerous headlong rush.

**Mr. De la Fuente Ramírez** (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We are grateful for the convening of today's briefing of the Security Council, and we thank the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, for his briefing on the critical situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. The nuclear plant regulator's statements on the effects of the attacks that took place last weekend are indeed cause for great concern. It is clear to everyone that a nuclear accident would have devastating consequences on an international scale.

It is precisely for that reason that we unambiguously reiterate that any attack against nuclear facilities is unacceptable, in line with what was established at the 2009 IAEA General Conference, that is, that any attack or threat against nuclear facilities dedicated to peaceful purposes constitutes a violation of the principles of the United Nations Charter, international law and the Statute of the Agency. Similarly, such attacks violate international humanitarian law, including the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocol I of 1977 thereto, which were ratified by the parties to the conflict. The parties therefore have no justification whatsoever for not complying with them.

The situation prevailing in Zaporizhzhya in recent days is part of a deplorable pattern of attacks against civilian infrastructure. Mexico urges respect for the obligation not to attack civilian targets, which includes, of course, not carrying out indiscriminate or disproportionate attacks. International law, international humanitarian law and nuclear security conventions must be respected without exception. As Director General Grossi pointed out, we are facing a real risk of nuclear disaster. The humanitarian consequences would be catastrophic for both human health and the environment.

We echo the Secretary-General's call for an IAEA inspection of the Zaporizhzhya plant as soon as possible. We urge that no obstacles or conditions be put in the way to prevent such inspections. It is this mission that will provide us with objective, truthful and independent information on the conditions prevailing at the plant, which we urgently need to know.

I conclude by reiterating our support for the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency to create conditions for the stabilization of the plant, and we urge the IAEA Director General to continue to keep the Security Council informed of nuclear safety developments in Ukraine, as he has done. Finally, once again, what these serious hardships show is that a diplomatic solution to the conflict leading to a cessation of hostilities must urgently be sought.

**Ms. Moran** (Ireland): I would like to thank Director General Grossi for his briefing. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has an indispensable role to play in supporting Ukraine to ensure nuclear safety and security at all facilities in that country, especially since Russia's invasion, and he has our full backing in his work.

Ireland is deeply concerned by the situation at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and the strong risk of a radiological accident or incident arising from military activity at the site. Such an incident could have devastating consequences for the people of Ukraine, who have already suffered so much from the actions of the Russian Federation. It would also have serious consequences for the wider region.

Let us make no mistake: the issues at Zaporizhzhya arise solely from the unjust and unprovoked war waged by Russia against Ukraine. The reckless actions of the Russian military forces in Ukraine have already demonstrated their utter disregard for nuclear safety and security, including in their violent, illegal seizure and occupation of the Zaporizhzhya facility. Their actions raise real fears of a significant radiological, chemical or biological accident in Ukraine.

Director General Grossi previously set out the basic principles of nuclear safety and security that should be respected. We call on Russia, and indeed all States, to commit themselves — in all circumstances, including in situations of armed conflict — to these seven pillars of nuclear safety and security in relation to peaceful nuclear facilities and materials.

While we are meeting in this Chamber today, in other parts of this building, delegations are gathered for the Review Conference of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT). The NPT forms the cornerstone of the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation architecture. Russia's actions in Ukraine risk undermining all three pillars of work under that important Treaty. We urge the Russian Federation not to violate or undermine such essential multilateral instruments, upon which our collective security depends.

In calling for today's discussion, Russia seeks to avoid its responsibilities and distract from what is really happening due to its unjustified and unprovoked war on Ukraine. We again urge the Russian Federation to stop using the Security Council to try to advance its disinformation campaigns. If Russia is serious about safety at the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, what it needs to do is clear. It must end its illegal occupation of the site and withdraw its troops and munitions so that the Ukrainian authorities, with the IAEA, can uphold their responsibilities for safety and security at the site. The IAEA Board of Governors has set out the same in a resolution adopted at its special session in March.

Finally, Ireland again calls on Russia to end its brutal war against the Ukrainian people, withdraw its troops from the entire internationally recognized territory of Ukraine and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of its neighbours.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I thank Director General Grossi for briefing us once again on the situation in Ukraine.

The United Kingdom remains deeply concerned about the ongoing impacts of Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and, in the context of today's meeting, its effects on nuclear safety. The Security Council discussed Russia's reckless actions at Ukrainian nuclear facilities, including in Chernobyl and Zaporizhzhya, at the start of the invasion. On 3 March, the Board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) adopted a resolution calling for Russia to cease all actions against and at all nuclear facilities in Ukraine so that the competent Ukrainian authorities could regain full control and ensure their safe and secure operation and the IAEA could resume its important safeguards verification activities.

Now, more than five months later, Russia's control of the Zaporizhzhya plant continues. The competent Ukrainian authorities and IAEA inspectors are still prevented from properly carrying out their essential duties. As Director General Grossi said, Russia's actions have violated almost all of his seven pillars of nuclear safety and security. Russia's actions are contrary to the principles of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and other international nuclear safety conventions and put in jeopardy the safety of millions who would be affected by a nuclear incident in Ukraine. In the light of that, and despite Russia's continued lies and obfuscation in the Chamber about its brutal and irresponsible assault, we should be clear: it is Russia's continued invasion and military presence that put the plant at risk, thereby endangering the local population, the wider region and the entire international community.

We welcome Director General Grossi's efforts to strengthen nuclear safety and security in Ukraine in challenging circumstances, as well as the tireless, heroic efforts of Ukrainian nuclear facilities' staff, despite the immense pressure they are under. We reiterate our call for IAEA inspectors to be permitted access to all nuclear facilities in Ukraine to address nuclear safety, security and safeguards concerns in a manner that respects Ukraine's sovereignty over its territory and infrastructure. In that regard, we note

with appreciation Foreign Minister Kuleba's letter to Mr. Grossi and the Secretary-General on the issue. We once again call on Russia to immediately withdraw its forces from Ukraine and return full control of all of Ukraine's nuclear facilities to their rightful, sovereign owner to ensure their safe and secure operation.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of China.

I thank Director General Grossi for his briefing.

China has been closely following the issue of safety and security at the nuclear facilities in Ukraine and is deeply concerned about the recent attack on the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. According to the information obtained by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) from Ukraine's nuclear regulator, the attack did not pose an immediate threat to nuclear safety, and radiation levels remained normal. Nevertheless, the attack damaged the physical integrity of the plant, its safety and security system and power supply. It also posed a threat to the safety of plant personnel and sounded a nuclear alarm to the international community.

The safety and security of nuclear sites must not be subject to trial and error. The Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant is one of the largest in Europe. If a large-scale accident were to occur at that plant, the consequences would be more devastating than those of the Fukushima nuclear accident. The leakage of massive quantities of radioactive material caused by the Fukushima nuclear disaster and the resulting nuclear-contaminated water had far-reaching consequences, including repercussions for the marine environment, food safety and human health, thereby sparking widespread interest and concern. China does not want to see the same risks being incurred again. We therefore call on the parties concerned to exercise restraint, act with caution, refrain from any action that may compromise nuclear safety and security and spare no effort to minimize the possibility of accidents.

China has always supported the IAEA's active role in promoting nuclear safety and security and in performing its safeguards duties in strict accordance with its mandate. We note that Director General Grossi and the IAEA team of experts have planned to visit the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. Secretary-General Guterres has also issued an appeal to that end. Russia has undertaken to provide the necessary assistance

to facilitate the visit. We are also aware that, in its letter dated 9 August to Director General Grossi and Secretary-General Guterres, Ukraine underscored the increasing need to organize that visit. We hope that the current obstacles will be removed as soon as possible so that the mission by Director General Grossi and the IAEA team of experts can take place without delay and that they will be able to conduct their work without impediment.

The crisis in Ukraine has been dragging on for more than five months. The security risks to nuclear facilities posed by the conflict loom large. Only by defusing the situation and restoring peace as soon as possible will we be able to eliminate nuclear risks, reduce miscalculation and avoid accidents. Once again, we call on all parties concerned to resume negotiations as soon as possible, seek a solution to the crisis in Ukraine in a calm and rational manner and address each other's legitimate security concerns through a balanced, effective and sustainable security architecture with a view to achieving common security.

It is China's consistent position that the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations should be upheld. State sovereignty and territorial integrity must be respected. We call upon all parties in the international community to act responsibly to facilitate an appropriate solution to the crisis and step up political and diplomatic efforts in order to create the conditions for the parties to return to the negotiating table. China will continue to play a constructive role in that regard.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Today, once again, none of our Western colleagues decided to call a spade a spade by recognizing that it is the armed forces of Ukraine that are recklessly shelling the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. From what has been said, it would seem that Russia alone has created risks there. So then what is the meaning of the Ukrainian armed forces' shelling of a nuclear power plant? Is it a response to risks created by Russia? That is surreal and faulty logic, but we are certainly not surprised. For six months now we have seen not just a disinformation war unleashed against us but a war of lies.

Our Western colleagues have long chosen what they believe to be a perfect tactic when discussing Ukraine-related topics — a coordinated effort to blame Russia for everything that is happening within the zone of hostilities, categorically rejecting any possibility, even a hypothetical one, that Kyiv might bear any guilt, as happened with the provocations in Bucha and Irpin and in Kramatorsk.

Incidentally, why have references to the events in Kramatorsk disappeared from the radar? More than 50 people were killed in the railway station there by a multiple-launch rocket-system strike. I will tell you why — because the station was hit by a Ukrainian Grad rocket launcher, and the rockets had a Ukrainian military serial number. That is irrefutable. The recent report issued by Amnesty International, hardly a pro-Russian organization, confirmed what we have been saying at every meeting on Ukraine since the beginning of the special military operation, which is that the armed forces of Ukraine and Ukrainian nationalist battalions are using the civilian population as human shields and residential buildings as firing points, as well as deploying heavy weaponry and artillery in the vicinity of hospitals, schools and kindergartens.

Look at the indignation it caused in the West — how dare Amnesty International blame the Ukrainians for anything? To paraphrase a well-known proverb, when it comes to talking about Kyiv, either say something nice or say nothing at all. In practice, that means that Kyiv continues to be given *carte blanche* to commit any crimes at all. Instead of calling a spade a spade, we see glaring double standards and miracles of resourcefulness orchestrated so that not a shadow of responsibility is attributed to Kyiv, although it is obviously guilty of this shelling. That is irresponsibility in action, an inability to assume responsibility for global problems if it does not jibe with the West's narrow mercantile geopolitical interests.

In the case of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, we have seen how the Western version of events has played out in Western minds, whereby the responsibility for shelling the Zaporizhzhya plant is of course Russia's. We heard it in the awkward statements today. With the small exception of the especially zealous supporters, today we were spared those nonsensical allegations, which were too absurd for the respectable adults in this Chamber, but we are shocked by the irresponsibility of Europe's political elites, who in their irrational and unconditional support of Kyiv are willing to jeopardize



the safety of their own citizens. We might wonder if they have any common sense.

We call on our colleagues to convey to their leaders the need to influence the Kyiv regime and force it to stop its irrational strikes on the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, which is essentially turning the residents of European States into hostages, and our colleagues are among those who bear responsibility for that.

We note with regret that the Secretariat is not able to give a sober assessment of the situation. We hear statements, including from the Secretary-General, that “the plant may be subjected to attacks or may be a basis for the launching of attacks”, and he calls for it to be demilitarized. Russia is not using civilian infrastructure, not to mention nuclear facilities, for that purpose. That is a tactic of the Ukrainian armed forces, who, in violation of the norms of international humanitarian law, are setting up military positions in close proximity to civilian infrastructure and using civilians as human shields.

As I already mentioned, Russian soldiers, in close coordination with the plant’s staff, are ensuring the protection of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and are repelling the Kyiv regime’s attacks every day. Thanks to their efforts, it has so far been possible to protect the plant’s key infrastructure in order to prevent a nuclear catastrophe.

We know what the Kyiv regime is capable of, and the world has witnessed it as well. Those who are calling for the withdrawal of Russian forces should realize the consequences of the facility being left unprotected and being potentially used by Kyiv and nationalist groups for their utterly monstrous provocations.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the United States of America has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

**Ms. Jenkins** (United States of America): I will be brief. I do not really want to repeat everything that I said before. I just want to again appeal to Russia to end its seizure of the Zaporizhzhya power plant and return control of the facility to the Government of Ukraine. We will then see how quickly civility returns to the facility.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the United Kingdom has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

**Mr. Kariuki** (United Kingdom): I will also be brief. Let us call a spade a spade and be very clear:

there would be no risk to nuclear safety without the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia. That invasion has cost countless civilian lives, and this incident at the nuclear facility is precisely because Russia carried out that invasion.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

**Mr. Kyslytsya** (Ukraine): I recognize the representative of terrorist Russia in the permanent seat of the Soviet Union.

Just half a year ago, one could hardly imagine a situation where the biggest nuclear power station in Europe would be seized following an armed attack by tanks and artillery, backed by military personnel and weaponry, which is now being used to shell Ukrainian cities and villages across the Dnipro River.

It is a matter of alarm that, in order to divert attention from those practices, Russia has resorted to dangerous provocations, the staged shelling of the nuclear power plant itself. The Russians are well known for their elaborate plans of deceit, sabotage and cover-ups, like the one we witnessed today.

A conclusion one may draw from today’s torrent of deception by the Russian envoy is that, when they realized that their plan had collapsed like a house of cards, Russia decided to go for broke and call this meeting. That call looks especially cynical considering their most recent attack on the facility earlier today, which directly endangered both the plant facilities and its personnel.

I would like to thank Director General Grossi for his briefing. He has provided us with a comprehensive update on the current situation that makes it clear that the only way to ultimately remove the nuclear threats due to the illegal Russian presence at the nuclear power plant is the withdrawal of the Russian troops and the return of the station to the legitimate control of Ukraine.

Ukraine highly appreciates the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the United Nations to ensure the safety and security of the Ukrainian nuclear facilities against the backdrop of the Russian invasion. The Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant has been occupied since 4 March, with its personnel working at gunpoint. Ukraine has been in close consultation with the IAEA about the matter. We have always underlined the importance of the Agency’s full and consistent implementation of its mandate.

In that regard, since the beginning of Russia's occupation of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, Ukraine has insisted on the need to send a mission to the site, and negotiated its modalities with the Agency. We therefore deeply regret that such a visit has not yet taken place due to the destructive Russian position. Despite their public declarations, the occupiers have resorted to manipulation and unjustified conditions for the mission's visit, as well as shelling the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and Enerhodar, thereby making the visit impossible so far.

We strongly reject the attempts by Russia to escape responsibility for the delay by blaming Ukraine, the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, as was the case not only today but also with the Russian Foreign Ministry statement of 9 August. That prompted Ukraine's Foreign Minister, Mr. Kuleba, to reiterate the extreme importance of conducting the Agency-led international mission to the site in his letter to the Agency's Director General and the Secretary-General, sent on 9 August.

We welcome the readiness of the IAEA Director General, expressed during this briefing, to send the mission, led by the Agency, to the occupied Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, which should be conducted in strict compliance with the national legislation of Ukraine and with full respect for its international obligations. We stand ready to provide the mission with all the necessary assistance and to facilitate its travel through Ukrainian-controlled territory.

Let it be known that the distance between the Ukrainian-controlled bank of the Dnipro River and the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant, which is on the opposite side of the river, is five miles, be it from Nikopol or Marhanets. If Russia stops shelling those cities, what in the world will prevent the mission from covering those five miles?

In the light of the continued militarization of the site of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant by the Russian armed forces, its shelling and subsequent damage to, and mining of, certain areas of the site, it is imperative that such a mission have qualified experts in the military dimension. That can be achieved by including those experts in the mission team. Ukraine also sees much added value in drawing upon relevant and extensive United Nations political expertise. United Nations representatives will be able to make a significant contribution to the preparation of the mission's final report, thereby outlining the military dimension of

the critical threats and challenges to nuclear safety, security and safeguards at the Zaporizhzhya plant site, stemming from its occupation and militarization by Russian armed forces.

It is absolutely clear that the provocative Russian practices of shelling the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant and the city of Enerhodar pose an unprecedented threat to nuclear security for Ukraine, Europe and the world as a whole. Russia must strictly abide by the laws and customs of war, including those relating to nuclear facilities.

The shelling that took place on 6 August sheds light on how those provocations are arranged. In particular, the Russian occupants present at the site at the time of the shelling — in total, about 500 soldiers — and representatives of the Rosatom State Atomic Energy Corporation took shelter in advance, before the shelling began, while the local employees were wounded. It also speaks volumes that Russian military hardware, deployed at the nuclear power plant, was hidden in the power houses at the first and second reactors. The shelling damaged three radiation-monitoring detectors at the dry spent-fuel storage facility site, which made early detection and a timely response in the event of the deterioration of the radiological situation or release of radiation from the spent-fuel containers impossible.

On 7 August, Russian armed forces again resorted to shelling the Zaporizhzhya plant site and damaged the 750-kilowatt overhead power line of the Zaporizhzhya plant Kakhovska substation. As a result of the shelling, a safety trip switch was activated at one of the power units. Currently, that power unit is being cooled down. Consequently, there is only one remaining direction of power delivery at the Zaporizhzhya plant. Should that last line be damaged, the Zaporizhzhya plant will be totally without power. Russian plans regarding the Zaporizhzhya plant aim to disconnect it from the energy system of Ukraine and cut off electricity in the south of the country.

Earlier, the Russian occupiers also mined the Zaporizhzhya plant outside the cooling pond and the banks of Kakhovska reservoir, which borders the plant. Moreover, Russian armed forces are using the plant as cover for shelling the Ukrainian-controlled cities located on the opposite side of the Dnipro River, especially Marhanets and Nikopol, with multiple-launch rocket systems. Under such circumstances, the Ukrainian personnel of the Zaporizhzhya plant continue to do

their best to ensure nuclear and radiation safety, as well as to mitigate the consequences of the Russian shelling.

Let me underline that the Russian actions at and against the Zaporizhzhya plant completely violate practically all seven indispensable nuclear safety and security pillars outlined by the Director General at the meeting of the Agency's Board of Governors on 2 March. We demand that Russia fully implement the resolution of the Agency Board of Governors entitled "The safety, security and safeguards implications of the situation in Ukraine", dated 3 March. Russia must immediately cease all actions against nuclear facilities in Ukraine and return control over all seized nuclear facilities to the Ukrainian side. The international community must continue to put political pressure on the aggressor State of Russia and demand the full and unconditional de-occupation of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. Ensuring the safety and security of the nuclear facility cannot be seen as a goodwill gesture. It is the duty of an occupying Power, in accordance with international humanitarian law.

Now, let me explain it to the Russian ambassador in the simplest way, step by step, in a way that even a school kid could understand. First, Russia must state loud and clear that it will allow an IAEA-led mission to take place immediately and unconditionally, and that it will not obstruct the mission across the river, five miles from plant. Secondly, Russia must demine the facilities of the Zaporizhzhya nuclear power plant. Thirdly, Russia must remove its military personnel and withdraw its weaponry. Fourthly, it must stop playing games.

None of us can stop the wind if it carries radiation, but together we are capable of stopping a terrorist State. And the sooner we stop Russia, the sooner Europe and the world will be able to feel safe again.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): The representative of the Russian Federation has asked for the floor to make a further statement.

**Mr. Nebenzia** (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I do not plan to engage in a polemic with a representative of the Kyiv regime and react to the stream of conscience and lies that he shared with us today.

On the subject of the mission of the International Atomic Energy Agency, which was interrupted by Kyiv, I would suggest that Council members look again at our statement, which says everything very clearly.

I would like to draw attention to something else, namely, that the representative of the Kyiv regime is the only one at today's meeting who said that it was Russia that shelled the power station that is under its control in the city of Enerhodar, which is also home to the plant's staff. Even the backers of Kyiv ruled out saying this. For the record, I would like to draw the Council's attention to this statement by the Ukrainian side.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): Before concluding the meeting, I now give the floor to Mr. Grossi to make a brief statement.

**Mr. Grossi**: I thank the President for giving me the opportunity to make a succinct closing statement. I want to thank all members of the Council for their statements, which are very important for us at the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), as they help us to understand even better how they see things.

Of course, it is not our remit to get into the political considerations, and we recognize the obvious differences that exist. But there is something very important that I at least personally take from this meeting. There is a common denominator in the Chamber in New York: everybody agrees that nuclear safety and security must be preserved; everybody agrees and supports the seven pillars of nuclear safety and security; and everybody believes that the IAEA mission must take place. It is therefore no longer a matter of "if"; it is only a matter of "when". And the "when" must be "as soon as possible".

It is only the "how" that needs to be addressed. As I indicated in my initial briefing, I am consulting — and I will be intensifying my consultations — with Ukraine and with the Russian Federation. Of course, the United Nations, through the United Nations Department for Safety and Security, has been involved in all of this, with a view to having the IAEA conduct a mission that is so badly needed.

Of course, after that, or at any other moment, I will be at the disposal of the Security Council to continue briefing on our function and on our mission to support Ukraine at this important hour and to restore complete safety and security to all the facilities in the country.

**The President** (*spoke in Chinese*): I thank Mr. Grossi for his clarifications and additional comments.

There are no more names inscribed on the list of speakers.

*The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.*