



European Union

**EU Statement on
Agenda item 6(c): Safeguards Implementation Report for 2020
IAEA Board of Governors
Vienna, 7-11 June 2021**

Madam Chair,

1. I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The following countries align themselves with this statement: Turkey[§], The Republic of North Macedonia^{*}, Montenegro^{*}, Albania^{*}, Bosnia and Herzegovina^{*}, Iceland[†], Liechtenstein[†], Norway[†], The Republic of Moldova and Georgia.
2. The European Union thanks the Director General for the Safeguards Implementation Report (SIR) for 2020 and appreciates the Secretariat's continued efforts for more detailed, informative and transparent reporting. We commend the Agency for having continued safeguards inspections under the difficult circumstances of the Covid-19 pandemic, maintaining the level of its safeguards activities, performing all of its most time-critical in-field verification work and drawing sound safeguards conclusions.

Madam Chair,

3. IAEA safeguards are a fundamental component of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), they play an indispensable role in its implementation and help to create an environment conducive to peaceful nuclear co-operation. The EU attaches utmost importance to the integrity of the IAEA safeguards system and strongly supports the Agency's efforts to strengthen the effectiveness and improve the efficiency of its safeguards system.
4. We reiterate our position that the Additional Protocol (AP), together with a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement (CSA), represents the current verification standard. Only the implementation of a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and an Additional Protocol enables the Agency to provide credible assurances of the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. We advocate universal adherence to both instruments and once again call upon all States that have not yet done so to conclude a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and to sign and ratify the Additional Protocol without delay. In this regard, we welcome the Additional Protocols to be concluded between the IAEA and the Republic of Zimbabwe, and between the IAEA and the Republic of Sierra Leone, and we thank all Member States for conducting demarches in this regard.

[§] Candidate Country

^{*} Candidate Countries The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

[†] Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

5. In line with the Board's 2005 Decision to modify the standard text of Small Quantities Protocol (SQP), the EU also calls upon those remaining States which have not yet amended or rescinded their SQPs to do so, especially countries that are already in the process of building a nuclear power plant or a research reactor. The EU welcomes the renewed efforts of the Director General in this regard to which we have contributed with a series of EU demarches in the concerned SQP States.

Madam Chair,

6. The EU supports the implementation of integrated safeguards that allow for the optimised combination of safeguards measures available under the CSA and the AP and thereby increase the effectiveness and efficiency of safeguards implementation. The EU encourages both the Agency and the Member States to resolve outstanding issues so the broader conclusion can be drawn for more States. In this regard, the EU welcomes that in 2020, the broader conclusion was drawn for El Salvador, Nicaragua and Nigeria for the first time and once again for Libya.
7. On safeguards implementation in Ukraine, the EU takes note of the Agency's assessment that the current circumstances prevent it from verifying certain nuclear material previously declared by Ukraine. We also take note that, according to footnote 41 of the SIR, on the basis of the Agency's evaluation of all safeguards relevant information available to it, the Agency did not find indications that would give rise to a proliferation concern. The EU reiterates the importance to continue addressing the situation on the basis of international law and with full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty, territorial integrity, unity and independence within its internationally recognized borders.
8. The EU supports the State-level Concept (SLC) and the Agency's continued efforts to develop and implement State-level safeguards approaches (SLAs), including in three new States in 2020. An effective and consistent SLA strengthens the international non-proliferation regime. The EU understands SLAs to be the Secretariat's applied methodology of implementing Safeguards Agreements, in line with its established mandate.

Madam Chair,

9. The EU provides considerable support to the Agency's safeguards system both through the European Commission Safeguards Support Programme, and through the support programmes of several EU Member States, which provide a wide range of additional assistance and capabilities to support the Agency.
10. The EU underlines the importance for all States to meet their obligations as defined in the safeguards agreement with respect to facilitating access and establishing or strengthening the capacity of their safeguards implementation. In this regard we welcome the launch of COMPASS, the IAEA Comprehensive Capacity-Building Initiative for State Systems of Accounting for and Control (SSACs) and State or regional authorities responsible for safeguards implementation (SRAs). COMPASS is designed to further support States in building capacity towards safeguards implementation by providing them with an optimized assistance package tailored to their specific needs.

11. The EU welcomes the continued efforts of the Agency to improve gender balance in the Secretariat and mainstream gender aspects in its safeguards activities. We look forward to further progress in this area.
12. With these comments, the EU supports the recommended Board action set forth in GOV/2021/23.

Thank you, Madam Chair.