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Statement of the Czech Republic

IAEA Board of Governors

Vienna, 6 - 10 March 2023

Agenda item 7: The safety, security and safeguards implications of the situation in Ukraine

Mr. Chair,

The Czech Republic fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Sweden on behalf of the EU. We also associate with the Joint Statement on Nuclear Safety, Security, and Safeguards in Ukraine presented here by Canada and Finland and we thank them for its preparation.

For more than a year Russia continues with its unprovoked war of aggression and delivers deliberate brutal and barbaric attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure including nuclear facilities in Ukraine. Russia's actions in Ukraine flagrantly violate international law and are entirely inconsistent with the objectives of the IAEA Statute. The Czech Republic is gravely concerned about Russia's non-compliance with the three Board's resolutions adopted during 2022 and its continued blatant disregard of the seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security, as outlined by the Director General. Let me emphasize that each of these principles has been compromised as a result of Russia's illegal invasion. This situation is unprecedented and unacceptable.

Russia's illegal occupation of Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant, the largest NPP in Europe, seriously endanger its safety and security and we will never recognize Russia's attempted illegal seizure of the Zaporizhzhya NPP. We urge Russia to immediately and unconditionally withdraw all its armed forces from the entire territory of Ukraine, including from the Zaporizhzhya NPP, and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognized borders. Other Russian personnel must also leave the

power plant so that the Ukrainian authorities can resume their sovereign responsibilities and that the legitimate operating staff can conduct their duties without outside pressure and interference. We are grateful to the Ukrainian staff for their critical work and heroic efforts in the most stressful circumstances and reiterate our full support.

We thank the Director General and commend his team for continued highly professional reporting on nuclear safety, security, and safeguards in Ukraine and we fully support the IAEA's Missions to assist Ukraine in maintaining nuclear safety and security, and to implement safeguards pursuant to Ukraine's safeguards obligations. We recognize and fully support the importance of the IAEA's continued presence at all Ukraine's nuclear facilities. We also continue to support the IAEA Director General's efforts to reach agreement on the establishment of a protection zone around the Zaporizhzhya NPP, in full respect for Ukraine's sovereignty.

Finally, Mr. Chair, we are witnessing here Russian awkward game to blame others for its own brutal aggression against Ukraine followed by groundless accusations. Let me be clear, since the Russian military entered the territory of Ukraine and started its illegal invasion, it is only Russia solely responsible for all war crimes, atrocities, human lost and suffering in Ukraine. Russia is an aggressor who is illegally using military force against another State to achieve its geopolitical goals. It is the sole reason for the current crisis. Russia made its own decision to start the war against Ukraine. The only right thing to do for Russia to stop this war is to immediately, completely, and unconditionally withdraw its forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders.

Thank you, Mr. Chair