



European Union

**EU Statement on
Agenda item 5: Transfer of the nuclear materials in the context of AUKUS
and its safeguards in all aspects under the NPT**

**Board of Governors
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

Vienna, 24-26 November 2021

Mr. Chairman,

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*, Serbia*, Albania*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Iceland*, Liechtenstein*, Norway*, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and San Marino].

In view of the discussion on the safeguards related aspects of AUKUS, the EU would like to make the following remarks.

The IAEA's safeguards system is an indispensable component of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons. The EU strongly supports the IAEA's verification role under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and the strengthening of the IAEA's safeguards system. We continue to call for the universalisation of the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements together with the Additional Protocol as the current verification standard, and encourage all States to support this objective at the upcoming NPT Review Conference.

The EU is of the view that the objectives of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime in preventing the spread of nuclear weapons are best served by the IAEA through the full, impartial, independent and objective implementation of safeguards. It is important that full consideration be given to any proliferation implications and risks.

[§] Candidate Country

* Candidate Countries the Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia 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.

In this regard the EU takes note of the statements to the Board made by Australia and its partners, the UK and the USA, that maintaining the integrity of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, mindful of any safeguards-related precedents that might be set, would be their core objective during the consultative process over the following 18 months in the context of Australia's acquisition of nuclear powered submarines. We welcome their stated commitment to a high standard of international assurances and fulfilling their respective Agency obligations. We also support the Director General's statement in this connection that, while working with the interested parties on this complex, technical matter, he will be "solely guided by the Agency's statutory mandate and Australia's safeguards agreement".

We take note that a specific task force has been set up in the IAEA Secretariat to give consideration to the application of relevant provisions of the safeguards agreements of the parties to this matter. Close cooperation from the outset between the Secretariat and the concerned parties is necessary and strongly encouraged. Any arrangement must be implemented in conformity with and in a way that will not compromise the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and the respective legally binding safeguards obligations.

Bearing in mind the need for a transparent process, the EU expects that the Director General will keep the Board informed on this issue, including on the work of the task force as it develops, in such a manner and at such times as he deems appropriate. Indeed, the EU trusts the expertise and the professionalism of the IAEA Secretariat to address this matter in an independent and impartial manner. Therefore, the EU does not support the proposal to establish any new open-ended forum in this context.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.