



Statement

on the occasion of the upcoming Nuclear Energy Summit

20th March 2024

On the occasion of the upcoming first ever Nuclear Energy Summit, the regular plenary meeting of the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) reiterated the overriding priority of nuclear safety in the use of nuclear energy. ENSREG underlined the high levels of nuclear safety, radiation protection and safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management provided in the EU by the Euratom legal framework. Its provisions, implemented by Member States under the control of the independent EU Member States nuclear safety regulators, constitute a world-leading regulatory framework in the nuclear field for the safety and protection of citizens.

Driven by decarbonisation goals, security of supply considerations in the context of the war in Ukraine, and industrial policy objectives, a number of EU Member States have been showing renewed interest in nuclear energy, which has further increased with new emerging technologies such as Small Modular Reactors (SMRs). Against this background and considering the decisions to develop new nuclear projects or to prolong the lifetime of existing installations, EU Member States nuclear safety regulators stand ready to continue playing their role, in a robust, competent and independent way and provide expertise and advice to support the Commission in addressing all nuclear safety related challenges.

In taking forward their work, and in line with the recommendations set out in the Commission's reports on the implementation of the amended Nuclear Safety Directive and the Spent Fuel & Radioactive Waste Management Directive, EU nuclear safety regulators will continue to work together within ENSREG and share experience and good practices for practical improvement of nuclear safety in the EU and abroad. The Euratom legal framework establishes ambitious safety objectives including the practical elimination of severe accidents involving large and early releases of radionuclides for new nuclear power plants and the obligation to continuously enhance nuclear safety of existing installations referring to requirements for new ones. The regular topical peer reviews and post-Fukushima nuclear safety assessments ('stress tests'), carried out together with the Commission, as well as the periodic self-assessments and peer reviews taking benefit of the IAEA peer review services, in line with Euratom legal framework, are good examples of the EU nuclear safety regulators' commitment to nuclear safety. Moreover, ENSREG is committed to sharing its knowledge with third countries. It has been successfully conducting peer reviews of the stress tests implemented in several third countries according to the ENSREG methodology, including Armenia, Belarus, Taiwan, and EU candidate countries, such as Ukraine and Türkiye.

Considering the renewed interest in nuclear energy from some EU Member States while taking into account that nuclear safety regulators need to be able to fulfill their current regulatory obligations, ENSREG recalls the importance of dedicating sufficient resources to regulators to be able to fulfil their responsibilities effectively and efficiently.