



## **EU Statement**

### **76<sup>th</sup> UN General Assembly, Fourth Committee, Agenda item 52: Effects of atomic radiation**

**United Nations, New York  
October 2021**

This statement is delivered on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

The Candidate Countries Turkey, the Republic of North Macedonia\*, Montenegro\*, Serbia\* and Albania\*, the country of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

The EU and its Member States wish to express their satisfaction with the outcome of the last Session of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation.

The work undertaken by the Scientific Committee in assessing the effects of atomic radiation on human health and the environment is in line with EU priorities and has played an important role in improving international scientific understanding of the biological mechanisms, by which atomic radiation-induced effects on human health and non-human biota can occur.

On the basis of its scientific authority, the Committee is essential in supplying the international community with information within various areas connected to the radiation sources, exposures and effects of ionizing radiation. Those assessments provide the scientific foundation in formulating international standards for the protection of the general public, workers and patients against ionizing radiation.

Regarding the present programme of work of the Committee, we welcome the Committee's work on medical exposure to atomic radiation, which represents by far the population's largest source of artificial atomic radiation exposure and is one of the EU priorities with respect to atomic radiation protection.

We further welcome the work on public exposure to ionising radiation from natural sources, other radiation sources and discharges to the environment, which is another EU priority in the area of atomic radiation protection.

We note with satisfaction the Committee's efforts to improve collection, analysis and dissemination of data on atomic radiation exposure. Providing national and international institutions with reliable information that can be used in the development of recommendations on protection and safety for processes and procedures that use ionizing radiation is essential.

The EU and its Member States welcome the Committee's work on atomic radiation risks from the potentially harmful effects of ionising radiation in all exposure situations on people and the

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\* *The Republic of North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and Albania continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.*

environment, and is confident that the research projects launched in this area by the EU in 2014-2020, and planned in the new Work Programmes for 2021-2025 will contribute with key information to these international efforts.

## **Additional information**

The current Commission presidency committed in the Political Guidelines to “a European plan to fight cancer, to support Member States and stakeholders in improving cancer control and care [...] to reduce the suffering caused by this disease”. Atomic radiation technologies are providing solutions to some of the most pressing societal challenges, including cancer, cardiovascular diseases and many other health conditions. Atomic radiation allows new diagnostic and therapeutic approaches for combating cancer; therapeutic applications using ionising radiation are developing and paving the way for personalised and targeted therapies. From the patients' perspective, atomic radiation is present in every step, from diagnosis through treatment, to monitoring of long-term outcomes. This is why quality and safety of medical procedures using ionising radiation need to remain a high priority.

Ensuring safety of new treatment options for all those involved - patients, medical staff and public, is a crucial area requiring further development. Better understanding of potential atomic radiation side effects will contribute to higher degree of confidence in the decision making process and in the choice of medical procedures. This will lead to justified radiological procedures and optimized health protection. Safe and high quality atomic radiation technology is key in providing high standards care to all patients.

A multidisciplinary approach is needed to improve knowledge on atomic radiation risks and effects, including their interaction with other risk factors, and advancing understanding of the link between exposure characteristics and the cancer and non-cancer effects. This will pave the way for better recommendations and new solutions for health protection against the dangers arising from ionising radiation.

We must not overlook the importance of providing data to the scientific community that can be used in research and development of training tools. Well-directed research is fundamental for adequate risk assessment of ionising radiation and risk management of its applications.

The EU co-funded European Partnership on Radiation Protection will be launched in 2022 (with EUR 30 million) under the Euratom Research and Training Programme 2021-2025.