

EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN 2017

Cooperation within the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom)

In the context of Slovakia's membership in Euratom, throughout 2017 ÚJD SR covered the European agenda in the field of peaceful use of nuclear energy, securing the tasks and fulfilling the obligations that result from its membership. Representatives of ÚJD SR regularly participated in meetings of working groups of the EU Council, as well as the meetings of working committees and groups of the European Commission (EC), as experts in the areas affected by the ÚJD SR competences, especially in relation to the obligations and activities resulting from the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (the Euratom Treaty), advocating the interests of the Slovak Republic.

One of the most important working groups of the EU Council in terms of nuclear safety is the Working Party on Atomic Questions (WP ATO). In the context of the agreement concluded between Slovakia and Malta, in the first half of 2017 Slovakia continued during the Maltese Presidency (MT PRES) in the role of the chair of this working group (covered by the Permanent Representation of SR to the EU in Brussels). During MT PRES, 4 WP ATO sessions were held with staff representation and support of experts from ÚJD SR and close cooperation with the Ministry of Economy of SR. Organizational and administrative support was provided, problem-free negotiations, expert coverage of the relevant agenda, as well as mediation in promoting interests of individual member states and seeking compromise solutions. MT PRES ended as at June 30, 2017. During the second half of 2017, under the Estonian Presidency the Report of the Euratom community on the Joint Convention on the Safety of Radioactive Waste and Spent Nuclear Fuel Management, the Commission Report on the Implementation of Works under the Decommissioning Assistance Program for NPPs in Lithuania, Bulgaria and SR were adopted, and also other topics were discussed, such as for example, the radioisotopes for medical purposes, or the Annual Report of the Euratom Supply Agency (ESA).

In May 2017, the EC published the first ever EC Report to the Council and the European Parliament on the progress made in implementing the Council Directive 2011/70/ Euratom and on the inventory of RAW and SNF located within the Community territory and on the forecast of future development. This is an important document, developed and published by the EC in the field of safe management of RAW and SNF based on reports sent by the member states, including Slovakia. Equally important document published by the EC in the spring in accordance with Article 40 of the Euratom Treaty, was the Nuclear Illustrative Program. It provides an overview of investments made by the Euratom Community covering all the life-cycle phases of NIs. Both documents were discussed by the WP ATO.

Activities within the European High Level Group on Nuclear Safety (ENSREG) and its sub-groups in 2017 were aimed at continuing to monitor the measures taken and implement recommendations resulting from the Peer Reviews as part of the Stress Tests (Action Plan) carried out following the Fukushima nuclear disaster. On its basis, in December 2017, ÚJD SR sent the EC an updated evaluation of the implementation of the National Action Plan based on the results of NPP Stress Tests. The SR is continuously implementing it and fulfils all recommendations made. In June 2017, the 4th ENSREG Conference was held on current issues in the field of nuclear safety. The conference participants discussed issues of safe management of SNF and RAW, NPP licensing, long-term operation of NIs and also dealt with the system of management and control of the supply sector. Throughout 2017, the ENSREG group discussed and coordinated preparations for the first thematic peer review of the Euratom member states,

which is being prepared in accordance with the provisions of Council Directive 2014/87/Euratom. The objective of the thematic peer review process is to:

- Allow participating countries to review their measures for aging management of NPPs, identify good practice and areas for improvement;
- Carry out European peer reviews, share operational experience and identify common issues faced by Euratom member states;
- Provide an open and transparent framework for participating countries to identify appropriate follow-up measures to remedy areas for improvement.

In this respect, ÚJD SR in cooperation with the license holder developed and in December 2017 sent to EC the National Assessment Report of the Slovak Republic on aging management of nuclear power plants, which will be discussed during the peer review of member states in 2018.

At the end of 2017, ÚJD SR in cooperation with the Public Health Office of SR and the Ministry of Transport and Construction of SR worked out and sent to EC already the third National Report of SR on the implementation of Council Directive 2006/117/Euratom on supervision and control during shipments of RAW and SNF for the period 2015 – 2017. Slovakia fulfils all its obligations arising from the Directive.

In the course of 2017, the inter-ministerial coordination group continued to coordinate the tasks resulting from the Articles of the Euratom Treaty, which was established at ÚJD SR based on Government Resolution No. 442/2006. Two meetings were held during the year, in April and in November 2017. Discussions focused on current issues and adopted recommendations mainly on the transposition of the Council Directive 2013/59/Euratom. Next year the group will continue its work and address current issues.