

EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN 2022

Cooperation within the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom)

In the context of Slovakia's membership in the European Union (EU) and the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), the Authority implemented the tasks and fulfilled the obligations arising from this membership. The activities of 2022 were partly affected by the ongoing global measures taken against the spread of COVID-19. The online format was gradually replaced by face-to-face meetings again. Representatives of the ÚJD SR participated in the meetings of the working groups of the Council of the EU and in the meetings of the working committees and groups of the European Commission (EC), where they presented and defended the interests of the Slovak Republic as experts within the scope of the competences of the ÚJD SR, related mainly to the obligations and activities arising from the Euratom Treaty (Euratom Treaty).

One of the most important working groups of the Council of the EU from the perspective of nuclear safety is the Working Party on Atomic Questions (WPAQ). The Council of the EU was chaired by Finland in the first half of 2022 and by the Czech Republic in the second half of 2022. Since March 2022, both presidencies have addressed the issue of military aggression by the Russian Federation and the armed conflict in Ukraine. Other topical issues were the preparation of the Declaration to the Review Meeting of the Parties to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment (CPPNM/A), the EU Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation for 2021-2027, the preparation of draft responses to questions concerning the Euratom Community Report to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel and RAW Management, the Euratom Community report on the Convention on Nuclear Safety, information from the European Supply Agency, the Joint Research Centre, new innovative nuclear technologies and small modular reactors and other topics were discussed. The Slovak Republic reported on the progress and results of the IAEA IRRS Mission, as well as on the process of commissioning of Unit 3 of the Mochovce NPP.

In order to assess the risk arising from the military aggression of the Russian Federation at the sites and in the vicinity of nuclear installations in Ukraine, extraordinary meetings of the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG), currently chaired by the Chairperson of the ÚJD SR, have been held on ad-hoc basis since February 2022. ENSREG has published several statements on the safety of the NIs in Ukraine and has established a permanent technical group to continuously assess developments on the case. Nuclear safety in Ukrainian nuclear installations, in particular the possible consequences of the shelling of the Zaporozhye NPP, has been continuously assessed. In November, the ENSREG Plenary Meeting adopted a Declaration on the safety of Ukrainian NPPs following intentional large-scale attacks on Ukrainian energy infrastructure.

Other activities of ENSREG and its subgroups in 2022 were mainly focused on the continuation of the monitoring of the actions taken and on the implementation of the recommendations resulting from the stress tests (Action Plan) carried out after the Fukushima nuclear accident and the preparation of the second topical peer review under Council Directive 2014/87/Euratom on nuclear safety on the fire protection of nuclear installations. The current report on the implementation of the Action Plan is published on the website of the ÚJD SR, as well as on the ENSREG website. Under the auspices of ENSREG and in cooperation with the EC, the 6th ENSREG Conference on Nuclear Safety in Europe was held in Brussels in June 2022. The main topical blocks were devoted to public participation in the process of radioactive waste

management and long-term operation of NPPs, innovative nuclear technologies, such as small modular reactors, as well as a selection of key topics for nuclear safety research. The conference programme also included a session on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In response to the situation triggered by the military aggression of the Russian Federation in Ukraine, a special session on nuclear security in times of war/armed conflict was included at the beginning of the conference.

In the course of 2022, the Interdepartmental Coordination Group for the coordination of tasks arising from the articles of the Euratom Treaty, led by the ÚJD SR and established on the basis of the Government Resolution No. 442/2006, continued its activities. Two meetings were held, in May and in November 2022, where information was exchanged on the activities of the various ministries and institutions within the established framework, topical issues were discussed and recommendations for the implementation of the Euratom Treaty were adopted.