

# EUROPEAN AFFAIRS IN 2023

## Cooperation with the EU and the European Atomic Energy Community

In the context of Slovakia's membership in the European union (EU) and in the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom), in 2023, the ÚJD SR performed the tasks and fulfilled the obligations arising from this membership. Representatives of the ÚJD SR actively participated in the discussions in the working groups of the Council of the EU, as well as in the meetings of the European Commission (EC) working committees and groups, where they defended the interests of the Slovak Republic as experts in the areas of competence of the ÚJD SR, in particular the obligations and activities arising from the Treaty establishing the European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom Treaty).

One of the most important working groups of the EU Council in terms of nuclear safety is the Working Party on Atomic Questions (WPAQ). In the first half of 2023, the EU Council was chaired by Sweden (SE PRES) and in the second half of the year by Spain (ES PRES). Experts of the ÚJD SR participated in the meetings of the WPAQ as required, while the position of the SR was prepared for each meeting in close cooperation with the Ministry of Economy of the SR and the Permanent Representation of the SR to the EU in Brussels. The current security situation in Ukraine (UA) resonated during both the SE PRES and ES PRES meetings, in particular the report on the activities of the EC and the IAEA in relation to UA and the impact of Russia's (RU) military aggression on the UA nuclear facilities. Furthermore, the WPAQ meetings included the preparation of the Joint 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Review Meetings of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, information from the European Supply Agency, the Joint Research Centre and the EC briefed the Member States on other topical issues (e.g. security of supply, implementation of the INSC instrument, medical radioisotopes, small modular reactors). SR reported on the results of the ARTEMIS mission and on the process of commissioning and start-up of Unit 3 of the Mochovce NPP.

The European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) has had several emergency meetings in the past period in cooperation with the Ukrainian nuclear regulator (SNRIU) in order to assess the risks arising from the military actions of the RU at and near the NPP sites in the UA. Currently, ENSREG activities are focused on the preparation of the work programme for the period 2024-2026, monitoring the implementation of the Action Plans adopted after the Fukushima events and from the 1<sup>st</sup> Topical Peer Review on the NPP ageing. At the same time, the 2<sup>nd</sup> Topical Peer Review is under preparation, for which a National Assessment Report on fire protection of the NI in the Slovak Republic has been prepared. The seventh ENSREG Conference on Nuclear Safety in Europe is planned to take place in Brussels in 2024 under the auspices of ENSREG and in cooperation with the EC. After four years of active work, Marta Žiaková, the Chairperson of the ÚJD SR, has ended her chairing of the ENSREG Plenary. At the same time, the Director General of the Regulatory Activities and International Relations of the ÚJD SR, ended his chairing of the WG1 ENSREG on nuclear safety.

Under the auspices of ENSREG, a number of meetings of the Working Group on the commissioning of the Turkish Akkuyu NPP have taken place. The ÚJD SR is also represented in the working group. A visit to this NPP is currently planned, together with stress tests.

In accordance with the requirements of the Council Directive 2011/70/Euratom, the ARTEMIS mission was undertaken from 12 to 22 February 2023 at the request of the Slovak Government. The aim of the ARTEMIS mission was an international assessment of the national policy and

the national programme for the management of spent fuel and RAW, decommissioning of NIs and remediation. The mission was carried out as a follow-up to the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission, which assessed the regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety in Slovakia in September 2022. The results of the mission are summarised in the Final Report, which commends the high standard of the infrastructure for the RAW management from the decommissioning of the nuclear installations, while formulating a number of recommendations and suggestions for further improvements for the SR and the different organisations involved, in particular in the area of preparation of a deep geological repository for high-activity RAO.

In February 2023, the EC published the fourth EC Report to the European Parliament and the Council on the implementation by Member States of Council Directive 2006/117/Euratom on the supervision and control of shipments of radioactive waste and spent fuel, which the EC prepared based on the National Reports of the Member States, including Slovakia. The Report covers shipments for the period 2018-2020. In December 2023, Slovakia sent the EC the fifth National Report of SR under Council Directive 2006/117/Euratom, covering shipments for the period 2021-2023.

In the course of 2023, the interdepartmental coordination group for the coordination of tasks arising from the articles of the Euratom Treaty, which was established at the ÚJD SR based on the Government Resolution No. 442/2006, continued its activities. Two meetings were held during the year, in June and November 2023, discussing topical issues such as the outcome of the ARTEMIS mission, the preparation and outcome of the ENEF meeting, the establishment of the Nuclear Alliance, Horizon Europe activities, small modular reactors (PHOENIX project), as well as adopting recommendations for the implementation of the Euratom Treaty. In the coming year, the group will continue its activities and address topical issues.