

E3 Statement to the IAEA Board of Governors on NPT Safeguards Agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran, March 2021

Madam Chair,

Germany, France and the United Kingdom would like to thank Director-General Grossi for his report on the implementation of safeguards in Iran, contained in GOV/2021/15, and Deputy Director-General Aparo for the Technical Briefing of 25 February.

We fully support and trust the professional, independent and impartial verification conducted by the IAEA regarding Iran's safeguards obligations. We re-emphasise the importance of the IAEA evaluating all safeguards-relevant information available to it in line with standard practice, and we encourage it to continue doing so. We are deeply concerned about the findings in the DG's report stating that Iran has still not provided technically credible explanations for the presence of nuclear particles of man-made origin detected by the Agency at the first site mentioned in the report, originally identified in February 2019. According to the IAEA, these particles include man-made forms of natural uranium as well as isotopically altered particles of low enriched uranium and of slightly depleted uranium. Despite repeated intensive interactions between the IAEA and Iran, over a period of roughly 18 months, Iran has still not provided sufficient and plausible explanations. As a result, the IAEA cannot exclude that undeclared nuclear material may have been present at this undeclared location and that such nuclear material may remain unreported by Iran. This is a safeguards concern.

Therefore, we strongly urge Iran to extend full cooperation to the Agency and clarify this issue in a technically credible manner without further delay.

With regard to the second location mentioned in the DG's report, we note with dissatisfaction that the current location of a metal disc made of natural uranium – which has been the subject of previous reporting by the IAEA – still has to be clarified.

It is of utmost importance that Iran should swiftly respond and facilitate the additional verification activity which the Agency needs to conduct in this respect. We will follow up on this issue and look forward to further updates by the IAEA.

Furthermore, the Agency has stated that it has detected man-made uranium particles at the third and fourth locations mentioned in the report. These findings are the analytical result of environmental samples taken by the Agency during two accesses to undeclared locations conducted in August and September 2020.

We note that the IAEA requested that Iran provide clarifications to the IAEA in January 2021, and call on Iran do so in a comprehensive and timely manner.

In this context of mounting unresolved safeguards questions, it is deeply concerning that Iran has decided to suspend application of the Additional Protocol and transparency measures agreed under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), as of 23 February. The implementation of the Additional Protocol in Iran is crucial for the Agency to ascertain the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran.

Moreover, we have taken note with deep concern of Iran's stated intention to stop the implementation of Modified Code 3.1 of the Subsidiary Arrangements to Iran's Safeguards Agreement. We fully share the position of the DG, expressed in his report, and previously affirmed by the Board and the United Nations Security Council, that the implementation of this code is a legal obligation under the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and cannot be modified unilaterally or revoked by Iran.

We strongly urge Iran to implement Modified Code 3.1 and to resume implementation of all transparency measures as envisaged in the JCPOA, including implementation of the Additional Protocol.

We are clear that Iran should refrain from any step impeding the IAEA's work and provide full cooperation to the Agency with a view to clarifying and resolving all outstanding safeguards issues without further delay. We encourage the Director General to continue reporting to the Board of Governors, as appropriate, and would welcome making this report public.

Thank you, Madam Chair.