Statement by Ms. Marta Žiaková,

Chairperson of ENSREG,

following the Group's 53rd meeting of 20 November 2023

The 53rd meeting of European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group (ENSREG) took place on 20 November 2023 in Brussels. ENSREG welcomed new members representing Austria, Poland and Sweden. ENSREG elected Mr Lentijo, the President of the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council, as its new chair starting his term on 1 January 2024. ENSREG elected the chairs of Working Groups 1 and 2, as well as the chair of the 7th ENSREG Conference and the members of its Steering Committee.

The three ENSREG working groups informed about their activities. The draft Work Programme for 2024-2026 was discussed and will be adopted by written procedure by the end of the year. The draft work programme sets activities in four main areas: implementation of the EU and international peer reviews, safe management of spent fuel and radioactive waste, nuclear safety related activities, openness transparency and communication activities.

ENSREG decided to continue work on pre-licensing aspects for Small Modular Reactors (SMR) and on establishing interaction with the future EU SMRs Industrial Alliance. The French Nuclear Safety Authority (ASN) informed about the NUWARD SMR Joint Early Review.

In the context of Russian war of aggression against Ukraine, the acting chair of the State Nuclear Regulation Inspectorate of Ukraine (SNRIU) provided an update on the overall nuclear safety situation in Ukraine with the focus on the occupied Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant. He stressed that IAEA experts have limited access to the key site areas and emphasised the importance of the IAEA 67th General Conference Resolution 16 on nuclear safety, security and safeguards in Ukraine. SNRIU will share more detailed written information about the licensing of alternative fuel in Rivne nuclear power plant. The Commission presented the EU activities and instruments to support Ukraine and its safety regulator.

The Group was informed about the state of play of the second topical peer review on fire protection which has entered the desktop review phase. Particular emphasis was given to the lack of experts which has led to a reduced scope of the review for certain installations.

ENSREG received an update on ongoing and planned stress tests in third countries.

HERCA and WENRA informed about their activities. Furthermore, WENRA presented its recommendations issued following the discovery of intergranular stress corrosion cracks on some French pressurised water reactors. ENSREG agreed with the Commission's proposal to organise a workshop for a wide group of experts from stakeholders to discuss non-destructive examination techniques of nuclear power plant components.

The ASN updated on the ongoing procedure to review the organisation of nuclear safety oversight in France.

The next ENSREG plenary will be held on 20 March 2024.