**Remarks of President of the Republic of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan at the ceremony marking the delivery of nuclear fuel to Akkuyu NPP**

**President of the Republic of Turkiye Recep Tayyip Erdogan:**

Mr President, my dear friend Mr Putin, IAEA Director General Rafael Grossi, our nuclear power plant workers,

I welcome you warmheartedly, with all respect and love.

Today we have gathered here to share our pride and joy in a big step that puts Turkiye up with other nuclear powers.

I would like to thank all of our guests, especially our alliance partners who are taking part in this great day, and all our citizens who are watching us from their screens.

This ceremony fulfills yet one more of our promises, our promises to our people: we are seeing the delivery of nuclear fuel, which is the penultimate step before loading the fuel. After the delivery of nuclear fuel to our nuclear power plant by air and by sea, Akkuyu received the status of a nuclear facility. Thus, Turkiye has risen to the league of the world’s nuclear powers, even if belatedly after a 60-year delay.

Today there are 422 nuclear reactors operating all over the world, and 57 are under construction. The European Union receives 25 percent of its electricity from nuclear power. Last year, the European Commission recognised nuclear energy as green energy, bringing any discussion of this issue to an end. With the Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant, we have made our country a part of these developments.

I would like to express my gratitude to all the authorities of the Russian Federation, above all, and especially to President Putin, who have supported our project from the very beginning.

Congratulations to all the Turkish and Russian personnel involved in the construction and production of our nuclear power plant.

Mr President, dear guests,

Here, we are building a nuclear power plant with four reactors. This nuclear plant alone will cover ten percent of the electricity consumption in our country.

This $20 billion investment project was designed and built by Rosatom, a Russian institution. Along with the construction of the facility, the responsibility for its maintenance, operation and decommissioning processes, which are essential for nuclear power plants, falls on the contractor. All the elements and units of our nuclear power plant will be put into operation in stages through 2028.

When it reaches full capacity, the plant will generate around 35 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually. Without a doubt, even with this alone, our plant deserves to be called a ”strategic investment“ because of its unique contribution to our country's energy security.

This project will reduce our annual imports of natural gas by $1.5 billion, and it will also have a favourable effect on increasing our national income. The knowledge and experience we will gain here will take us to a new level in the nuclear field.

Our engineers and technicians, who will be trained in Russia and work at our nuclear power plant, will enrich the workforce of our country in the nuclear power field. As Mr. President said, more than 300 engineers have graduated from Russian universities.

In the planning and implementation of this nuclear power plant that we built, Akkuyu, safety was a top priority. The fact that our nuclear power plant was not damaged by the monstrous earthquake that occurred on February 6 shows how carefully our engineers and technicians carried out their work.

Our nuclear power plant complies with the requirements of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the European Union's International Atomic Safety Advisory Group, and our own legislation in this field.

In light of our experience in this project, we certainly hope to take measures for the construction of a second and a third nuclear power plant, which we plan to build in different regions, as soon as possible.

We will always gratefully remember the solidarity shown by our companies and the Russian companies that implement the Akkuyu project and that are working here as contractors. They have done everything possible to support those affected by the earthquake. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Russian authorities for their military field hospital, which was set up in the earthquake zone.

I am happy about the startup of our power plant.

I also want to express my appreciation and respect to you and I hope to meet you face to face next time.

Thank you very much for your attention.