

Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the
Technical Cooperation Programme

**Statement by H.E. Professor Ana Paiva
Secretary of State for Science of Portugal**

1. Introduction

Distinguished Co-Chairs,
Director-General,
Excellencies,

Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Hungary on behalf of the European Union and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

I would like to start by thanking and congratulating the Co-Chairs, Ghana and Finland, as well as the IAEA Secretariat for their excellent work which led us to today's consensual adoption of the Ministerial Declaration, which Portugal fully supports.

This timely Conference occurs in a moment when we perceive a renewed interest in nuclear energy, giving us a much-welcomed opportunity to consider together how Member States can safely use nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes.

Despite having chosen not to have nuclear as one of its energy sources, Portugal is nevertheless fully aware of the significant progresses made in nuclear science and technology, and the prospects they have opened to its use to achieve global

the goals in a wide range of applications going from health to agriculture or environment protection.

We are committed to collaborating with the Agency in these areas and I am delighted to participate in this Conference and to hear from our partners experiences in those applications, and also about the technical cooperation programme that the Agency is promoting at a scale without precedent.

We see the Technical Cooperation Programme as an essential component of IAEA's work, of which Portugal is simultaneously a contributor and a beneficiary.

2. Education and training for developing countries

Within the Framework of the Memorandum of Understanding between Portugal and IAEA, 59 professionals from 17 countries have already benefited from education and training in Portugal. We will continue to do so, providing support for the education and training of professionals from developing countries, namely from Portuguese-speaking countries to whom we are united by History and a shared language.

Encouraged by the very positive good results obtained so far, we are working now on the renewal of the Memorandum of Understanding we have with the Agency, in a process we hope can be soon finalised.

3. Women in nuclear

Portugal is among the countries that believe in the added value that diversity and shared values can bring to our multi-cultural global society, strongly

believing that the respect of individual human rights is the right path to go, for they constitute the fabric of our societies.

In this context, we naturally attach greatest importance not only to women's rights but also to the enhancing of their role in our societies, ensuring their advancement in all areas of human activity, including research and science.

We recognise thus the importance of the IAEA Marie Curie and Lise Meitner programmes, fully endorsing and supporting their aims and goals.

4. Flagship initiatives

Portugal share the vision of Director-General Grossi to ensure that the benefits of nuclear technologies will be in the reach of all countries and peoples and commend his determination and leadership in the path that will guide us all to that important goal.

Through the flagship initiatives, the IAEA presented us with innovative forms of contributing to key challenges in our society and Portugal embraces these initiatives.

We are particularly interested in the programmes dealing with zoonic diseases, and also in those associated with treatment of oncological diseases,

With its inspired name, the Rays of Hope initiative is particular appealing since it can play a decisive and much needed part in extending quality medical care to all parts of our world, diminishing the current disparities among countries in access to cancer diagnosis and treatment instruments.

With the Portuguese Institute of Oncology, we are now studying the best ways to strengthen our collaboration with this initiative and improve our participation in the global effort to achieve its goals.

The Portuguese Government has recently announced a proton-therapy centre in the public sector, and our aim is to set up a collaboration with the IAEA for cancer care.

Besides the public sector, we have an ongoing partnership with the IAEA in the private sector as well.

5. Conclusion

The ministerial declaration is a positive statement of our will to work together in this process, and a useful tool since it sets all the possible mechanisms for our cooperation.

We endorse the declaration, the foresight and the impetus of the Director-General in addressing some of the most difficult challenges of our time.

Thank you.