



**Statement on behalf of Ireland to the General Conference of
the International Atomic Energy Agency by Dr. Seán Ó Riain,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Ireland**

Vienna, 19 September 2018.

National Statement by Ireland:
General Conference of the IAEA: 19 September 2018

Madam President,

Ireland aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union by the distinguished Minister for Foreign Affairs of Austria and would like to make the following statement in a national capacity.

At the outset I wish to express our support for the leadership of Director General Amano and wish him a speedy recovery; and to congratulate you, Madam President, on your election as President of the 62nd General Conference.

I begin by commending the IAEA as an exemplar of effective multilateral cooperation. Its work across the spectrum of nuclear energy, safety and security is indispensable. It plays a crucial role in managing the international system of safeguards under the NPT in a manner which is transparent, professional and effective and which fully enjoys the confidence of Member States. At a time when global cooperation through multilateral institutions is under strain, the Agency's work reminds us of what we can achieve together.

Ireland is fully committed to working with our partners in the international community – in particular the IAEA – in making progress across each of the three pillars of the NPT: multilateral nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies. We see the three pillars as interdependent and mutually reinforcing, and we welcome the 2017 General Conference nuclear security resolution, which was adopted by consensus. The

resolution draws attention to the link between nuclear security and multilateral nuclear disarmament, and stresses that the latter is critically needed.

Indeed, the implementation of the nuclear disarmament obligation of the NPT remains unsatisfactory. Existing commitments have not been fulfilled and are being called into question by the words and actions of some States. In this situation, it is more urgent than ever to strengthen the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime with the NPT as its cornerstone.

The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons does exactly this. The new treaty complements and strengthens the NPT in at least two ways. First, it provides a legal framework for the implementation of Article VI of the NPT. In addition, it strengthens the IAEA safeguards system based on the NPT. It reaffirms the safeguards standard enshrined in NPT Article III, obliges States which [already](#) have a higher standard in place to maintain it, and encourages all States to further raise their level of commitment in terms of safeguards.

The new instrument strengthens the international nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament regime, including the NPT and IAEA safeguards derived therefrom, the Treaties establishing Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones, and the CTBT. The Prohibition Treaty is now a fact, which cannot be ignored and may, in time, have implications for our work in Vienna.

Madam President,

While Ireland maintains a policy of not using nuclear energy for the generation of electricity, we are conscious of, and greatly value, the societal benefits from the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies. The application of nuclear technologies can and does make very positive contributions in many areas of

vital importance which are essential to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Ireland continues to be strong supporters of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme, including through the Technical Cooperation Fund and the Peaceful Uses Initiative. We strongly support all activities of the Agency to which contribute to attaining the SDGs. Ireland welcomes the upcoming IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology in Vienna in November and will be represented at Ministerial level.

While we recognise the societal benefits that can accrue from the application of nuclear technologies, we are, however, also conscious of the increasing risks which may be associated with nuclear power and technologies. If countries choose to use nuclear power then it is essential that it is used safely and securely.

Madam President,

Ireland believes the JCPOA agreed with Iran is a hugely significant non-proliferation agreement. It demonstrated what can be achieved through effective multilateral diplomacy and we call on all parties to implement all parts of the deal fully and effectively.

The DPRK's repeated nuclear tests represent the only breach this century of the global norm against nuclear testing. We welcome the inter-Korean summit and are encouraged by the direct talks between the DPRK and the US. However, these talks must be matched by action. We urgently call on the DPRK to return to the NPT and to sign and ratify the CTBT without delay.

My delegation regrets that the 2015 NPT Review Conference was not able to make any meaningful progress towards the much needed implementation of the 1995 Resolution on the Middle East. International peace and security would be significantly strengthened by progress towards the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East, through arrangements freely arrived at by all states in the region. This would also bolster the NPT.

Madam President,

For many years, the General Conference has also been the occasion of dialogue between coastal and shipping states interested in promoting greater communication in the area of the maritime transport of radioactive materials. As an island state, this area is of particular interest to Ireland, and we therefore agreed last year to succeed Portugal as coordinator of the Coastal States. We would like to thank our UK colleagues for their effective management of the group last year, and we look forward to continuing our very good cooperation with the new coordinator of the Shipping States, France, and to the organisation of a workshop during 2019 to draw lessons from the useful TTX exercise efficiently organised by Portugal last year. This dialogue is open to all members of the IAEA and we thank the Agency for its support to the dialogue.

Ireland is continuing to contribute across the broad spectrum of activities relevant to the work of the IAEA and is this year, for the first time, participating in the Nuclear Security Contact Group and the IAEA's Response and Assistance Network.

Madam President,

Ireland has underlined the importance of the Agency's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy, and was pleased to provide 125,000 euro in funding to PACT in 2013. We had intended to make a substantial contribution to PACT this year, but our contribution has been suspended until the managerial and other problems identified by the OIOS earlier this year have found a satisfactory solution.

I wish to underline the importance which Ireland attaches to the promotion of gender equality within the UN system. We welcome the Director General's undertaking last year to reach gender parity in his senior management team by 2021. Gender equality is not a women's issue, it is an organisation issue. We know that diversity delivers better decision-making, and this matter is particularly relevant in the present context. The continued and intensified pursuit of gender mainstreaming will be important to the Agency's efforts in supporting the SDGs, including SDG 5 to achieve gender equality and to empower all women and girls.

Pour terminer, voici quelques mots en français : nous souhaitons féliciter le directeur général Amano et l'Agence pour le lancement du site Web de l'AIEA en arabe, chinois, espagnol, français et russe en juin de cette année. Pour informer le public sur tous les continents du travail crucial de l'Agence l'utilisation de nombreuses langues est d'une importance capitale.

Merci, Madame la Présidente.

19 septembre 2018

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