



Statement by

H.E. Ms. Natasha Meli Daudey

Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Malta

63st Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference

16th to 20st September 2019

Madam President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset may I convey my congratulations to you, Madam President, on your election as President of this 63nd Session of the IAEA General Conference and assure you of my delegation's cooperation and support towards successfully accomplishing the important work before us. May I also take this opportunity to pay tribute to the former Director General Mr Yukiya Amano whose work will leave a lasting legacy for this agency and its important mandate. We wish to thank the Acting Director General, Mr. Cornel Feruta and his team for seamlessly carrying on the work of the Agency in these turbulent times.

Malta associates itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union. I would, however, like to add a few additional observations in my national capacity, relating to specific points of importance to my country.

Madam President,

Malta reiterates its absolute and unwavering support to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons as the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime and essential

for the enhancement of cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear technology whilst striving to achieve nuclear disarmament in accordance with Article VI of the Treaty. Malta continues to unequivocally call for the universalisation of the NPT, and invites states which are not yet parties to the Treaty, to reassess their position and to ratify the Treaty without further delay.

Despite being a small island with no notable nuclear power, given Malta's strategic central location in the Mediterranean, we continue to follow closely the events unfolding in this region, notably in the South of the Mediterranean as well as in the East, and specifically the Middle East. Malta reaffirms its full support for the establishment of a free zone of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East. We believe that the 2010 Action Plan remains the most promising basis moving forward. We emphasise that, in spite of the lack of concrete progress in this regard, the goals of the 1995 Resolution remain as valid as ever. Malta believes that furthering non-proliferation and disarmament efforts in the Middle East would be of great benefit and significance not only to the region itself, but indeed to the broader international community. In view of this, we call upon all States of the region to engage in constructive, positive dialogue, cooperating and working in good faith, towards achieving tangible progress to this end.

Malta reiterates its commitment to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) as an important multilateral achievement and calls on all countries to refrain from taking actions that impede the implementation of JCPOA commitments. Malta also commends the Secretariat for their continued professional work in verifying and monitoring Iran's nuclear related commitments.

Madam President,

Malta supports all diplomatic efforts which would lead to the easing of tensions and the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula. On the same vein, Malta calls upon the DPRK to fully comply, unconditionally and without further delay, with the relevant United Nations Security Council Resolutions and with IAEA General Conference Resolutions, and to return to the NPT and IAEA Safeguards as expeditiously as possible. The IAEA has an important role in the process leading to denuclearisation and we support the Agency's effort to enhance its readiness to fulfil its role.

Likewise, Syria's continuing non-compliance with its Safeguards Agreement remains a cause for concern. Malta calls upon Syria to cooperate fully and promptly with the IAEA, to address all unresolved issues, and bring into force an Additional Protocol without delay.

The IAEA continues upon its vital mission to ensure the application of nuclear technology for exclusively peaceful purposes, through effective multilateralism, and Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements, in conjunction with Additional Protocols. Such methods of engagement with the international community have facilitated the IAEA's verification work, and, in this regard, Malta endorses the universalisation of verification standards as established by the Agency, and we encourage the relevant States to sign and put into force these verification tools.

Madam President,

While nuclear safety and security are at the core of the IAEA's work, such priorities should not be restricted only to land systems. We firmly believe that this focus should be extended to transport networks, particularly maritime transport. As an island state and a leading Maritime Flag State, Malta retains a special interest in ensuring that the highest standards, in terms of preparation, communication and cooperation, are followed at sea to the same extent as on land.

Malta emphasises that the consequences of an incident at sea could be devastating, with a severe environmental risks.

Malta would also like highlight the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme, which enables the Agency to work closely with Member States in a safe and secure nuclear technology environment. The Technical Cooperation Programme is something which my country continues to ascribe a great deal of importance to because we have witnessed first-hand the tangible and important benefits which it can accrue. Over the past year, Malta has continued to implement national projects notably in terms of radiation therapy techniques for medical purposes, further strengthening our radiation safety regulatory framework and upgrading technical capabilities in the scientific application to cultural heritage. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the Agency for its assistance, cooperation and technical support, and look forward to participating in future programmes. The close collaboration between Malta and the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme is extremely valued and has culminated in the signing of a new Country Programme Framework covering the next six years starting from 2018.

Madam President,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate once more Malta's full support for the work and activities of the IAEA across various international levels and fora, whilst wishing all delegations a most successful Conference in the spirit of positive cooperation in pursuit of our common goals.

Thank you.