

**NATIONAL STATEMENT BY MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
DR VIVIAN BALAKRISHNAN
AT THE
64TH IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE GENERAL DEBATE
21-25 SEPTEMBER 2020**

Mr President,
Director General Rafael Grossi,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,

1 Let me begin by congratulating Ambassador Azzeddine Farhane of Morocco on his election as President of this General Conference. I also wish to reiterate Singapore's support for Director General Grossi and the IAEA's work, especially during these challenging times. The Agency's efforts to continue its important work in safeguards verification, capacity-building, and providing assistance to Member States, despite COVID-19, are commendable.

Mr President,

2 The IAEA plays a central role in maintaining nuclear safety and security. Its technical competence, professionalism, and impartiality have earned the Agency a high degree of trust from Member States.

3 There have been many difficult periods in world history. The present moment is no different.

4 We hope that whether in the Middle East or on the Korean Peninsula, Member States will work with the IAEA, uphold and fulfil their commitments, refrain from escalation, and renew efforts towards our common goal of a safer world for all. These are complex issues, and we do not expect instant solutions. But we must not close the door to peaceful solutions through negotiations. We believe they are possible with sufficient political will, and strong support for the rules-based multilateral system, including by giving our support and cooperation to institutions like the IAEA.

5 On the civilian front, as new technologies emerge, such as for transportable nuclear plants, small and medium-sized, or modular reactors, and advanced nuclear power reactors, the IAEA's role in ensuring nuclear safety and security will only become more critical. We need international legal instruments such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material to ensure the safe, secure, and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This will instil greater international confidence in the multilateral system.

Mr President,

6 Technical cooperation remains an integral part of the IAEA's work. Singapore is confident that the Agency will continue to support its members in tackling new and evolving challenges, including through initiatives such as ZODIAC. Singapore will continue to play an active and constructive role to support all these efforts. We look forward to continuing our strong cooperation with the IAEA, including renewing our Third Country Training Programme with the Agency.

7 We thank the IAEA for its continued support to strengthen the Association of Southeast Asian Nations' (ASEAN) capabilities to handle radiation and nuclear technologies, and their associated materials and activities, in a safe and secure manner. And we look forward to furthering our collaboration through the Practical Arrangements between the IAEA and ASEAN that was concluded at the General Conference last year.

8 Singapore will work with all Member States in building a culture of trust, collaboration, and open dialogue, towards a safer, more secure, and better future for all.

9 Thank you very much.

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