



Statement by

Hon. Evarist Bartolo

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Mr President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I convey my congratulations to you, Chair, on your election as President, and I assure you of my delegation's cooperation and support.

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.

Mr President,

2021 was another year of challenges but also of opportunities. Malta commends the resiliency of the Agency, which successfully rose to the challenge in overseeing the continuation of its important safeguards work, despite continued COVID-19 restrictions. The Agency achieved all this while working on innovative programmes to address current and future challenges such as NUTEC Plastics, ZODIAC and the ReNuAL 2 project in Seibersdorf.

Malta is proud to have played a role in the Agency's programme in the fight against the pandemic by contributing PPE. We look forward to further collaboration on these new initiatives.

As the main sponsor of the International Day of Women in Science, firmly supports the Agency's initiative to create a more inclusive workforce in the application of nuclear technology towards peaceful purposes. We are pleased that the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme was launched with the first group of 100 female scientists. This is definitely a practical step towards achieving a more gender-balanced workforce in the nuclear field.

Malta takes this opportunity to thank the IAEA and especially the Department of Technical Cooperation, for its support throughout the years. Through the Technical Cooperation Programme, Malta has continued to build logistical and technical knowledge in areas such as cultural heritage conservation, water treatment, radiation therapy techniques for medical purposes, and cancer treatment. TCP continues to be one of the Agency's most direct ways of assisting Member States in addressing key development goals, and for this we are most appreciative.

Is it not tragic, that last year 9 countries spent more than 72 billion dollars modernising their nuclear arsenal, while we did not find 50 billion dollars to vaccinate the population of low-income countries and stop so many deaths and people falling into starvation, unemployment and poverty.

Mr President,

A world that ensures the safety, security and peaceful use of nuclear technology is a world that includes an effective Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. A full return to the JCPOA is essential not only to the stakeholders, but also to the world. While we welcome the discussions held in Vienna towards reaching this end, Malta urges stakeholders to refrain from taking steps that could harm further the implementation of

JCPOA and commends the Secretariat for its work in continued safeguards verification and monitoring in Iran, even during the past year.

Malta calls upon the Syrian Arab Republic and the DPRK to cooperate fully and to return to full compliance according to their international obligations.

A peaceful and safe world requires unequivocal and universal support to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Through its signature and ratification Malta is proud to have been party to the entry into force of the NPT and calls on those still considering to be on the right side of history and join the process.

Mr President,

Before I conclude, allow me to recall a fundamental principle of multilateralism - the principle of the sovereign equality of all Member States, also entrenched in the Statute of the Agency.

To this end, Malta echoes calls made by other Member States in ensuring that this principle is respected within the different regional groups. Related to this, is my country's support to the goals of Article VI of the Statute, which calls for the enlargement of the Board of Governors in order to reflect the ever-growing, distinctive membership of the Agency. Malta calls upon Member States that have yet to accept this amendment, to consider doing so.

Mr President,

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

Thank you.