



European Union
EU Statement on
Agenda item 4: The Agency's Draft Budget Update for 2023 (Revised)

Third special session of the General Conference
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Vienna, 27 January 2023

Mr. President,

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its Member States. The following countries align themselves with this statement: North Macedonia*, Montenegro*, Serbia*, Albania*, Ukraine*, the Republic of Moldova*, Bosnia and Herzegovina*, Georgia, Iceland*, Liechtenstein*, Norway* and San Marino.

As this is the first time I am taking the floor, let me congratulate you, Mr. President, for your election also at this special session of the General Conference, after presiding over the ordinary one last September. We would also like to take the opportunity to pay our respect to all victims of the Holocaust on this Memorial Day.

Mr. President,

The EU and its Member States welcome the consensus reached on the revision of the Agency's Draft Budget Update for 2023. In these particularly challenging times for all of us, accepting a budget revision is a concrete sign of the support of all Member States for the Agency's important work. We warmly thank all who have contributed to this result, particularly the Director General, the Secretariat and the Chair of Board of Governors.

Let me recall that the EU and its Member States attach strong importance to the activities of the IAEA across the spectrum of its mandate. We remain committed to ensuring that the Agency is sufficiently and sustainably resourced, effective and efficient and able to meet its legal obligations, statutory tasks and the increasing demands of Member States in its core mandate areas. This is why we supported an increase of the 2023 budget, which will partially offset the unexpectedly high inflation rates experienced by all. We strongly hope that, going forward, we will return to a more standard procedure for developing and approving the programme and budget, including through the use of the regular price adjustment methodology.

* Candidate Countries North Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, as well as potential Candidate Country Bosnia and Herzegovina continue to be part of the Stabilisation and Association Process.

* Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway are members of the EFTA and of the European Economic Area.

We reiterate our full confidence in the IAEA Director General and the Secretariat and trust them to implement the programme and budget in an effective way, in conformity with the results-based approach. This also includes the full and effective implementation of the IAEA Staff Regulations, International Civil Service Commission rules and other relevant financial regulations. Therefore, we see no need for Member States to micro-manage Secretariat processes.

We support the Secretariat in continuing to seek savings and efficiencies in a way that causes the least negative impact on the programme and its balance. We recall that some Agency tasks are legally required and that sufficient resources must be set aside for these, even with the 74% cap on the human resources component of the total operational regular budget in 2023. We underline that further efficiencies in the Agency's operations, including with respect to staff-related costs, must not compromise the effectiveness of the Agency. This will be an important consideration as we examine opportunities related to the next budget cycle.

The EU and its Member States attach importance to the Agency's Technical Cooperation activities. We support the additional funding agreed for the Technical Cooperation Fund in 2023. We recall that, as per the Board's 2009 decision, all relevant factors must be taken into account in setting TCF targets, and that there is no straightforward correlation between increases of the Regular Budget and the TCF target.

Finally, we call again on all Member States to pay their assessed contributions in full and on time. In order to help address the current budgetary difficulties, the EU urges countries in arrears to meet their obligations expeditiously.

Let me end by applauding again the Chair of the Board, Ambassador Ivo Sramek and his team, for the tireless efforts to identify a viable and affordable solution to the budget shortfall.

Thank you, Mr. President.