

STATEMENT

BY

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Madame President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Vilawan Manklatnakul, on your election to preside over the 67th General Conference, and to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome The Gambia, the newest member of the Agency.

I would like to congratulate you, Director General Grossi, on your election for a second term. DG Grossi, I am confident that you will continue to successfully lead the Agency in achieving its goals.

Madame President,

The State of Israel attaches great importance to its cooperation with the Agency on a wide range of topics, including nuclear safety and security, technical cooperation, emergency preparedness, health and agriculture.

Israel dedicates the best experts to support and provide assistance for that purpose, and likewise, benefits from the Agency's expertise and

knowledge. Israel is also a proactive player within the Agency's core activities and initiatives.

This year, Israel made a significant contribution to the IAEA Director

General's Rays of Hope initiative, as well as donated equipment to Ukraine as part of Israel's commitment to the Convention on Assistance in Case of a Nuclear Accident.

Madame President,

Along with its firm commitment to the IAEA and its important mission, the State of Israel strongly believes in the principle of equal rights of all IAEA Member States. Israel supports the draft resolution by Kazakhstan on this issue.

Over the years, Israel has been deeply affected by the politicization by members of the Middle East and South Asia regional group, to which Israel naturally belongs. The fact that Israel has not been a part of a regional group has effectively denied it of its rights as an equal Member State.

It is critical that the Agency rectifies the long-standing discrimination against Israel and other Member States.

Madame President,

Unfortunately, Israel has also been continuously singled out for many years by the Arab Group's agenda item on the so-called "Israeli Nuclear Capabilities".

This agenda item, placed on the agenda year after year, is politically driven, and is completely outside the scope of the IAEA Statute and mandate. We strongly object to its inclusion on the agenda.

This agenda item draws attention from the important issues concerning the General Conference, to yet another attempt to politicize this professional forum.

Madame President,

Israel continues to maintain the highest and most updated safety and security standards in all relevant nuclear activities.

In this regard, Israel is pleased to state its political commitment to implement the IAEA Guidance on the Management of Disused Radioactive Sources, in addition to its commitment to the "Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources".

The war in Ukraine stresses the need for a global discussion on nuclear safety and security more than ever before, because, as we all know, the risks associated with nuclear safety and security, have no boundaries.

In this context, the international community must condemn the repeated and explicit threats by Iran and its proxies to attack Israel's nuclear facilities. Israel will continue to protect its facilities from these threats as required.

Madame President,

Last year, I addressed this distinguished forum and emphasized the threat stemming from the regional instability in the Middle East led by Iran.

Unfortunately, Iran is still the spearhead of regional instability, and is a threat to peace and security worldwide.

This reality requires the full attention of the international community.

There is no doubt that Iran conducted a military nuclear program aimed to produce several nuclear weapon devices. Iran continues to advance this program by gaining relevant technology and knowledge, along with fissile material in alarming amounts.

Iran has been conducting covert nuclear activities in undeclared sites for many years. The Agency has found concrete evidence of these activities, including the use of undeclared material.

Iran has continuously failed to provide credible explanations or clarifications regarding the nature of these activities, and continues to deceive the Agency and the international community.

Moreover, Iran continues to develop, test and deploy long-range ballistic missiles, in direct violation of UN Security Council

Resolutions, and supports terrorist organizations throughout the Middle East. Next month, the provisions on Iran regarding its ballistic missile activities under UN Security Council resolution 2231 will expire, allowing Iran to continue to advance its ballistic missile program without any formal limitations. This situation is dangerous and troubling.

Iran, equipped with nuclear weapons and delivery systems, is not an option that Israel, or the world, can, or should tolerate.

Madame President,

Four out of five known cases of NPT violations took place in the Middle East: Iran, Iraq, Libya and Syria.

Syria, which built an undeclared, clandestine nuclear reactor at Dair Alzour, optimized for Plutonium production, is still in non-compliance with its safeguards obligations for over a decade.

Syria has done nothing to rectify its noncompliance or cooperate with the Agency's investigation.

The international community should stand behind the IAEA with a goal towards receiving clear answers from Syria, once and for all.

Madame President,

Israel strongly supports the Agency's efforts to promote the discussion on renewable energies, especially in light of the global climate crisis and rising need for alternative energy sources worldwide. It is important to ensure that discussions on nuclear energy will include ways to reduce potential proliferation risks.

Israel, with its advanced capabilities, stands ready to contribute its expertise and knowledge to assist the Agency in achieving this important mission.

Madame President,

This time of year is regarded as the holiest time in the Jewish calendar, during which we celebrate the Jewish New Year, as well as Yom Kippur.

During this time, we reflect on the year that has passed, and look ahead towards a year about to begin.

Israel looks forward to continue our fruitful relationship with the Agency, this year, and in the years to come.

I thank you Madame President, for the opportunity to address this distinguished forum.