



*Statement by*

*H.E. Ms. Natasha Meli Daudey*

*Ambassador & Permanent Representative of Malta*

*62<sup>st</sup> Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference*

*17<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> September 2018*

Madame President, Distinguished Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset may I convey my congratulations to you, Madame President, on your election as President of this 62<sup>nd</sup> Session of the IAEA General Conference and assure you of my delegation's cooperation and support towards successfully accomplishing the important work before us.

Over the past year, the Agency has continued to play a truly instrumental role in the nuclear field; fulfilling a crucial technical mandate, playing a vital role in verification, helping steer the international community towards achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and striving to ensure the peaceful uses of nuclear technology to the benefit of Member States, in line with the concept of Atoms for Peace and Development. In this regard, I again take the opportunity to thank the IAEA Director General and the Secretariat for their diligent and professional work.

Malta associates itself with the statement delivered by Austria 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.

Madame 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. For this reason, Malta welcomes the Second Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2020 NPT Review Conference which took place in May of this year and we congratulate the able Polish chairmanship of this meeting. 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 closely follow the events unfolding in this region, notably in the South of the Mediterranean as well as in the East, and specifically the Middle East in particular. Malta regrets that the Conference on the establishment of a zone free of weapons of mass destruction and their delivery systems in the Middle East, which was foreseen to take place in 2012 by the 2010 NPT Review Conference, has not yet been convened. 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.

Madame President,

Malta wishes to take this opportunity to highlight the developments that took place on the Korean Peninsula. The recent inter-Korean high-level talks as well as the Singapore Summit between the US and the DPRK are positive steps forward. 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 comply fully, 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, while we are mindful that the ongoing conflict certainly complicates the IAEA's verification capabilities there. Nonetheless, 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.

Malta continues to view the significant Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) between the E3+3 and Iran in a favourable light. As long as the relevant parties continue to implement their commitments, Malta will continue to support the full and effective implementation of the nuclear deal. We encourage the full implementation of the Additional Protocol and the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement by Iran. We believe that the JCPOA reflects the potency of effective multilateralism in the field of non-proliferation. In light of this, Malta commends and fully supports the central role which continues to be played by the IAEA in the

verification and monitoring of Iran's nuclear activities, in line with UNSCR 2231, and the JCPOA itself.

The IAEA continues upon its vital mission to ensure the exclusive application of nuclear technology for 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.

Madame 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 to 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 agreement for a new Country Programme Framework covering the next six years starting from 2018. This new CPF will be signed in the coming days.

Madame 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.