



PERMANENT MISSION OF MALTA  
TO THE ORGANIZATION FOR SECURITY  
AND COOPERATION IN EUROPE,  
THE UNITED NATIONS AND OTHER  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

# National Statement of the Republic of Malta

International Conference on Nuclear Security (ICONS): Shaping the Future

20th May 2024

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Distinguished Co-Chairs,  
Excellencies,

First and foremost, Malta would like to join others in offering its condolences for the death of president of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ebrahim Raisi, Foreign Minister Hussein Amir Abdollahian and other Iranian officials involved in the tragic helicopter crash on Sunday. Malta expresses its sympathies to the families of all the victims and to the Iranian citizens affected.

Malta aligns itself with the statement of the European Union, but I would like to make a few remarks in my national capacity.

At the outset, we express our utmost gratitude to the Co-Chairs for their valuable work carried out in the build up to this conference. Malta regrets the absence of a Ministerial Declaration despite the tireless efforts of the co-chairs and the long negotiations by all member states. We should all be concerned that in spite of the dreary security climate, we could not agree to renew and strengthen international commitments to Nuclear Security.

Malta wishes to align itself with the Co-Presidents' Joint Statement . As we look to shape the future, we cannot let the momentum of a successful ICONS 2020 fade out without turning it into further tangible achievements.

In connection, Malta stresses that the commitments agreed upon in the Ministerial Declaration four years ago remain ever relevant and we call for their continued implementation. However, it is imperative that moving forward, we also take into account newly emerging challenges, and new realities shaping the current security environment.

In relation, we express grave concern regarding Russia's ongoing occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant, the violation of the 7 indispensable pillars for nuclear safety and security in armed conflict, and the dangerous implications that this brings for regional and global security. Malta notes the importance of relevant IAEA General Conference and Board of Governors' resolutions, including the most recent resolution 2024/18 adopted during the March Board of Governors session and of adherence to the five concrete principles and the seven pillars.

Excellencies,

Malta remains committed to promoting global nuclear security. As co-president Tim Watts rightly noted yesterday, nuclear security is just as relevant for small island states who might not possess nuclear reactors, but still utilize radiological sources. We also recall that any malicious utilization of nuclear and other radioactive material and facilities, could potentially jeopardize the security of all states, big or small, near or far.

Global efforts, cooperation and commitment are crucial in this regard. In connection, we believe in the IAEA's central role in facilitating and coordinating international nuclear security cooperation. We take this opportunity to once again thank DG Grossi and his team for their extraordinary efforts in fulfilling their mandate and leading the organization during these delicate times.

Malta fully comprehends the importance of gender equality for Nuclear Security. The field of nuclear security and nuclear science can only benefit from having both men and women in the field and we must harness the indispensable skills of both. To achieve this, we must focus our collective efforts to tackle existing barriers which stand in the way of diversity in the workplace. As the underrepresented gender, it is crucial to facilitate entry for women but also ensure the necessary working conditions which allow them to stay and thrive in the field. Malta commends the IAEA for its continuous efforts towards these goals and promises to continue supporting the agency in this endeavour. We are pleased to again see numerous gender-related side events on this year's agenda and look forward to seeing their fruitful outcomes.

In conclusion, Malta reiterates its commitment to maintaining and enhancing nuclear security through our cooperation at the IAEA, the work during our UNSC tenure, and further efforts within all relevant fora. As the theme of the conference noted, we the Member States are and will be shaping the future. So let us, with renewed political good- will, shape the future upon the pillars of trust and cooperation.

Thank you.