

# **STATEMENT**

**BY**

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**Check against delivery**

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

Let me start by commending you, Ambassador Peter Burian, on your election to preside over the 69<sup>th</sup> General Conference, and to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

I also wish to express deep appreciation to Director General Grossi for his leadership.

Mr. President,

For almost 50 years, the radical regime of the Ayatollahs in Iran has made it a goal to destroy the State of Israel.

This is not just an ideal, it is an operational plan.

The plan includes 3 elements: First, surrounding Israel with proxies of terror organizations which hide among civilian population in locations such as schools, hospitals and UN facilities. Second, an advanced ballistic missiles program aimed at Israeli cities. Third, which is the most important – gaining nuclear weapons capabilities.

Mr. President,

Iran's nuclear program is not a peaceful program.

It has a clear, directed goal – to develop nuclear weapons targeted against the State of Israel.

Israel's aim, like any independent country, is to survive and flourish. This is why we had to act against the Iranian threat.

Moreover, the international community warned Iran time after time to stop its military nuclear program, stop its clandestine and deception activities, and start cooperating with the IAEA.

It is important for me to emphasize that in the last year, not only did Iran not stop, it continued to develop its military nuclear program.

Mr. President,

What did our nation learn in the most brutal way on October 7<sup>th</sup>?

When your enemies vow to destroy you – believe them, but you must act to prevent them from carrying out this plan.

This is why a nuclear-armed Iran, combined with the ballistic missile threat, is a grave threat to the existence of the State of Israel.

Israel will forever act to remove such threats.

Mr. President,

In the months before Israel decided to strike Iran's nuclear program, Iran accelerated its weaponization program, and this program included two main activities:

clandestine development of process lines for multi-point detonation systems, and the development and experiments of a neutron source relevant for nuclear weapons. It is important for me to emphasize that we have not seen such accelerated efforts in the past two decades.

In addition, I believe that we should ask ourselves – if the Iranian nuclear program was for peaceful uses, why did they need underground enrichment facilities that are almost 100 meters deep?

Mr. President,

On June 13<sup>th</sup>, Israel struck at the heart of Iran's military nuclear program, destroying conversion and enrichment capabilities, as well as weaponization-related targets.

Israel acted to ensure its survival.

Iran is not just an Israeli problem. It is a threat to regional and global peace and security. Iran without a military nuclear program does not only make Israel safer, but makes the world a safer place as well.

Mr. President,

The State of Israel strongly believes in the principle of equal rights of all IAEA Member States.

Israel deeply appreciates the efforts led by the “Group of Friends” to advance this issue since the adoption of a General Conference resolution in 2023.

Israel hopes that this initiative will finally rectify the long-standing discrimination against Israel and other “arealess states”, and allow them to join their natural geographical groups.

Mr. President,

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

This agenda, 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, as well as to the linkage made to other political issues that are completely unrelated to the professional discussions of the General Conference.

We regret that this agenda item has once again been imposed on this professional forum, which unfortunately draws attention from the important issues concerning the General Conference.

Mr. President,

Israel’s contribution to the IAEA continues, including its cooperation with the Agency in the fields of nuclear safety and security, technical cooperation, emergency preparedness, health and agriculture and more.

Israel remains a proactive Member State, including in the IAEA’s initiatives, such as “Rays of Hope” and “Atoms for Food”.

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

Mr. President,

Israel looks forward to a successful Conference with meaningful outcomes.

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