



*The Permanent Mission of Italy
to the International Organizations
in Vienna*

Statement by H.E. Ambassador Filippo FORMICA

President of the 59th IAEA General Conference

(Vienna, 14-18 September 2015)

Your Excellencies,

Director General,

Distinguished Delegates,

Allow me to express my gratitude to all of you for my election and for the trust you have bestowed on me.

I feel deeply honored.

A special thanks goes to the Western European Group, in particular to Switzerland, Co-chair of the Group, for its support and encouragement.

I would also like to convey my appreciation to the President of the General Conference at its 58th session, my dear colleague and friend H.E. Ambassador Aliyar Lebbe Abdul Azeez of Sri Lanka, for his enlightened stewardship of the Conference last year.

Finally, I cannot fail to commend the Director General Yukiya Amano and the entire IAEA staff for their remarkable achievements and tireless efforts on behalf of the ideals of the Agency.

Let me assure each and every one of you that I will do my utmost to successfully fulfill this important task.

Distinguished Delegates,

The confidence we all place in the IAEA is a valuable and forward-looking investment in the international peace, security and development.

[And] I have no doubt that the months ahead of us will add further evidence to my belief, as the Agency will be called to provide its substantive contribution to the implementation of the historic agreement concluded right here, in this building, on the Iranian nuclear issue. Allow me, therefore, to praise all the delegations involved in the negotiations, including the colleagues here in Vienna and the IAEA team, for their professionalism and dedication.

The verification activities carried out by the IAEA deserve our full support. We should never forget that this Agency - *our* Agency - has been playing for decades a critical role in preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Its nuclear safeguards represent a fundamental instrument for the security of all of us, which in turn allow to develop, spread and fully reap the benefits from peaceful applications of nuclear techniques.

After all, the Agency was founded with the mission to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world, meaning that nuclear science should be used safely and securely at the peaceful service of all mankind.

[And] I am convinced that the IAEA has the knowledge, the authority and the expertise to live up to that mission.

One needs only to consider the efforts made by the Agency in order to ensure that the highest nuclear safety and security standards are met worldwide. A strong and effective international cooperation is required in these fields in order to fulfill an undeniable global interest, for the consequences of nuclear accidents know no borders.

I consider the release of the IAEA report on the Fukushima Dai-Ichi accident as a significant contribution to this General Conference. We all expect that the lessons learned from the accident will continue to be acted upon by governments, regulators and nuclear power plant operators in all countries.

In this respect, let me quote the Director General's remarks at the last June Board of Governors, by saying that there can be no grounds for complacency about nuclear safety in any country. Continuous questioning and openness to learning from experience are key to safety culture and are essential for everyone involved in nuclear power. Safety must always come first.

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

2015 is expected to be a turning point in setting the global development framework of the 21st century. In a few days the Post-2015 Development Agenda will be adopted. Needless to say that the stakes are the highest. The international community of policymakers is expected to devise concrete solutions to a number of major challenges facing humanity today. Including poverty and hunger eradication, climate change, management of water resources, availability of adequate health services, just to name a few of them.

We should not underestimate the actual and potential contribution the nuclear applications, and therefore the Agency, would give to address all these challenges, in particular in the Least Developed Countries. We simply cannot tolerate anymore that millions of people have no access to radiotherapy and other up-to-date cancer treatments.

It is a moral offense to human dignity.

Allow me therefore to underscore the paramount importance of the IAEA Technical Cooperation Program and to express the highest appreciation to the IAEA TC staff

that are working day by day for such a noble purpose. They deserve our commendation and our unceasing support.

Dear Colleagues, Distinguished Delegates,

The IAEA counts on us in order to successfully fulfill its ambitious tasks. At the end of the day, we, the Member States, are, at the same time, the stakeholders and the recipients of the Agency. It is our responsibility and our common interest to make the Agency perform at its best and to ensure that it will continue to have the technology, expertise, authority and resources needed to fulfil its vital, statutory responsibilities.

I am confident that this call will not be left unheeded at the end of our deliberations.

I thank you all and I wish you every success in your endeavors in the coming days.