

NORWAY

IAEA General Conference, 2023

Statement for the general debate, delivered by Mr Bjørn C. Rydmark, Minister Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Norway to the United Nations, Vienna

President,

Congratulations on assuming the Presidency of this year's General Conference. I also congratulate Director General Grossi on his reappointment. Mr Grossi, you can count on our full support during your second term.

Russia's illegal and unprovoked war against Ukraine is still ongoing. Despite numerous calls, Russia has declined to withdraw its forces from within Ukraine's internationally recognised borders. Russia's significant military presence at Europe's biggest nuclear plant Zaporizhzhya is deeply worrying. The Russian occupation continues to cause an unprecedented risk to nuclear safety and security.

The IAEA's support and assistance missions in Ukraine provide crucial information and assessments to the international community. We commend their efforts as well as the hard work of the Ukrainian personnel under extreme conditions. We fully support the Agency's seven pillars for nuclear safety and security and the five principles for the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Power Plant.

Norway will support the Resolution on Nuclear safety, security, and safeguards in Ukraine, and we encourage others to do the same.

Norway has worked closely with Ukrainian authorities on nuclear safety and security for many years. This year we increase our bilateral support in this area with 13 million euros. In addition, we signed yesterday an agreement with the IAEA worth close to 9 million euros, in order to assist the Agency's work in Ukraine, and at the Zaporizhzhya Nuclear Plant in particular.

President,

The NPT is the cornerstone of the non-proliferation regime and has contributed to our common security for more than half a century. The IAEA is the key

international institution to ensure adherence to NPT non-proliferation obligations.

All States parties must cooperate fully with the IAEA in implementing their safeguards obligations. The comprehensive safeguards agreement with an Additional Protocol, constitutes the current verification standard. Norway urges all States to bring the Additional Protocol into force, and to revise their small quantities protocols where applicable.

President,

We deeply regret Iran's failure to cooperate with the IAEA to resolve outstanding safeguards issues, including commitments in the March 2023 Joint Statement. Only Iran can provide the necessary clarifications. Iran's recent decision to withdraw the designation of several experienced Agency inspectors is yet another step in the wrong direction. We call on Iran to reconsider its decision and return to the path of cooperation in good faith.

Norway is gravely concerned by the DPRK's pattern of ballistic missile tests and continuous development of its nuclear program. We call for the DPRK's immediate return to dialogue and its complete, verifiable and irreversible abandonment of the program. We appreciate the Agency's readiness to resume nuclear verification in the DPRK.

We urge the Syrian Arab Republic to cooperate fully with the IAEA on all unresolved issues in connection with the implementation of safeguards.

President,

The issue of nuclear security runs parallel to the issue of nuclear non-proliferation. Instruments in these two areas are mutually reinforcing.

We call for the universal application of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, and for the full implementation of the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and relevant guidelines and politically binding instruments.

Norway strongly advocates minimising and eliminating the civilian use and stocks of highly enriched uranium (HEU). A Joint Statement on this has been

issued as Information Circular/912. There are several information circulars that touch upon priority areas for securing nuclear and other radioactive material. Endorsing these is a concrete step we all can take to demonstrate our commitments to improved nuclear security practices.

The IAEA plays a crucial role in coordinating nuclear security efforts internationally. We call on all States to ensure adequate funding for the IAEA's activities in this field. We also encourage member states to work towards a successful international conference on nuclear security, ICONS, in 2024.

President,

Nuclear technologies play a pivotal role in addressing the world's energy, health and agricultural needs, for the benefit of all people. Nuclear technologies are also instrumental to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals. The IAEA is a key facilitator in this respect.

We also commend the Agency for its efforts to include more women both in the secretariat and in nuclear-related industries.

President,

Director General

Colleagues and distinguished delegates

I wish you all success for this General Conference