

Sovereign Order of Malta

Statement by H. E. Ambassador Günther A. Granser

Permanent Observer to the United Nations and other international organizations

At the 58th General Conference of the International Atomic Energy

Vienna, 22 – 26 September 2014

Mr. President, Director General, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the delegation of the Sovereign Order of Malta, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election to the Presidency of the Fifty-Eight Regular session of the IAEA's General Conference. My delegation is confident that under your able leadership, the Conference will accomplish its business successfully. I would also like to congratulate all other Members elected to the Bureau. My delegation assures you all of its support and cooperation in your endeavor.

The Sovereign Order of Malta, the oldest humanitarian entity worldwide has its government headquarters in Rome. The Order works mainly for those suffering from the consequences of conflicts as recently inflamed in high risk areas worldwide and from natural disasters in all continents, introducing risk reduction measures and undertaking disaster preparedness planning by our relief organization Malteser International, in areas where populations lack access to the essentials of living peaceful, healthy lives. Humanitarian diplomacy worldwide means that our diplomatic network enables our emergency relief teams to access stricken areas quickly, and ensure that aid can be effected with minimal delay.

The Order is recognized as a sovereign subject of international law, whilst remaining independent and neutral, irrespective of political allegiances, has bilateral diplomatic and official relations at ambassadors level with more than 104 States, most of which are IAEA Member States, the EU and multilateral relations with the United Nations, where it was admitted by General Assembly Resolution, supported by all members, as Permanent Observer to the United Nations on August 24, 1994. The Order is also Permanent Observer in all the other international organizations of the UN family, except the IAEA, where the Order is being listed as NGO and not as entity, subject of international law.

In fact the Sovereign Order of Malta has been following the activities of the Agency since 1998 in the area of nuclear science and technology which are important to address global threats like climate change, food insecurity, the growing scarcity of potable water and a deteriorating environment. The IAEA is involved in a large number of activities of vital importance, in particular in developing countries, within the sectors of human health, food and agriculture as well as nuclear and radiation safety. Developing nuclear techniques for

the treatment of disease, making crops resistant to disease and to yield more, and control insect pests and to improve livestock are impressive examples and play a pivotal role in improving the lives of less privileged throughout the world, particularly in the fields of agriculture and health, which is also an important aim of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

In particular the Order is sensible to the growing pandemic that is threatening us by the increasing number of cancer patients. Nuclear science and technology, together with other preventive and curative health care measures, can make a major difference.

The Sovereign Order of Malta is since years engaged in these efforts together with the Agency through a Practical Arrangement with PACT to take a vigorous and concerted effort to combat the growing cancer epidemic and address control in an integrated, comprehensive manner through international cooperation. These concrete steps of cooperation with the Agency in the battle against cancer, particularly in Albania, will further enhance the relations between the Sovereign Order of Malta and the IAEA to support the advancement of cancer control in low- and middle- income countries.

This cooperation will be enhanced in future to cover also further countries since the Order continues to fight cancer and also diseases such as leprosy, HIV/AIDS malaria and tuberculosis and has established permanent health centers and clinics in many countries, providing local first-line medical and social care to remote and regional communities.

Appropriate technology is vital to sustainable development. In this regard, the Agency also contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals by helping Member States to build, strengthen and maintain capacities in the safe, peaceful and secure use of nuclear technology in areas where nuclear techniques offer advantages over other approaches.

The Order appreciates this year's Scientific Forum on "Radioactive Waste: Meeting the Challenge-Science and Technology for Safe and Sustainable Solutions", and its relevance of supporting research especially on safety, waste management, radiation protection, the safety and efficiency aspects of advanced technology and also the importance of enhancing international cooperation in these fields.

It is the aim and tradition of the Sovereign Order of Malta is to care on the humanitarian aspect in assisting the less privileged of the world's population and raise awareness and financial support for the disadvantaged members of the society who are rarely in the public eye or high on national agendas.

We are finally aware of the importance of our continuous co-operation with the Agency and its programmes and activities and we are committed to assure to the IAEA our full support also in the future.

Thank you, Mr. President