

*Statement of H.S.H. the Sovereign Prince of Monaco
2016 IAEA Scientific Forum, 60th session of the IAEA General Conference
Opening session, 28 September 2016*

Director General,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, let me tell you how happy I am to be with you today to mark the opening of the Scientific Forum on the crucial topic of the Sustainable Development Goals.

I would like to thank everybody that has contributed to the organization of this important event and commend them on the choice of subjects that will be addressed here.

The inherent connection that exists between terrestrial life and the vast expanses of the marine world meant that, in order to adopt Sustainable Development Goals that would be as comprehensive as possible for future generations, due priority had to be given to the seas and oceans and to human health, for the sustainability of our planet.

The sustainable development framework with its 17 goals, adopted in September 2015, mobilized the world beyond its continents, creating new hopes and fostering the emergence of a strong awareness.

We are in an era where the main changes to the environment are caused by humankind, which has become one of the forces driving change on a planetary scale. In just a few generations, human activity has become the dominant factor affecting the Earth's system.

In keeping with the spirit of our mission as policymakers, scientists, economic actors or members of civil society, and in respect of the absolute necessity of exercising the world's resolve, we must redouble our efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. They are the only means of altering humankind's environmental footprint and, furthermore, of protecting the health of the world's population.

The inclusion of this topic on the agenda of your meetings represents a new milestone in recognizing the role that science in general — and nuclear applications in particular — can play in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. The post-2015 development agenda has thus inaugurated a new era in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy.

The IAEA was founded on the principle of 'Atoms for Peace', which Mr Amano likes to expand to 'Atoms for Peace and Development', since it is true that there is no peace without development or, more precisely I would say, without sustainable development.

In this regard, speaking personally and on behalf of my country, I welcome the active role played by the IAEA in the elaboration of these Sustainable Development Goals.

Monaco is fully committed to creating a peaceful and better world through the use of nuclear applications for sustainable development.

That is why I am taking the opportunity today to restate my strong support for two areas related to the peaceful use of nuclear technology: environmental protection and the promotion of health worldwide, as these two areas are essential to sustainable development.

This association seems even more timely, given that scientific progress and environmental preservation are inherently related. In this context, the IAEA's scientific work is fundamental and must continue to be encouraged.

Scientific studies show time and again that the seas and oceans are being exploited with no thought for the consequences, and that this is compromising their ability to continue to serve as a food source, to offer economic potential and to play a role in regulating the environment.

That is why the sustainable development of these environments has now become a high priority for the international community, with stakeholders committing to coordinate their efforts.

Monaco is participating actively in these efforts, through numerous national and international activities related to the conservation and sustainable exploitation of the oceans and their resources.

In particular, my country has carried out significant advocacy work to see the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change establish a report dedicated to the oceans and the cryosphere. We also support research in many fields through the Scientific Centre and other entities in Monaco, and promote the establishment of protected marine areas — a cause for which I have campaigned for many years. These protected areas provide an appropriate framework for marine management which alone is capable of supporting the economic development of coastal populations, while preserving ecosystems.

For these reasons, Monaco is keenly interested in the work being done by the IAEA in this area, and I would like to assure the Agency of our full support for its activities.

In the video message that I delivered in 2013 at the opening of this forum, I noted that Monaco's support for the IAEA went back a long way, in the sense that Monaco, since 1961, has hosted with great pride the Agency's Marine Environment Laboratories, which in 2010 became the IAEA Environment Laboratories with a view to expanding their scope of activity to cover all environmental problems.

This historic partnership was strengthened in 2012 with the establishment of the Ocean Acidification International Coordination Centre at the Laboratories, a project supported by Monaco along with other States.

Policies for the sustainable development of the oceans must take into consideration the results of scientific research and assessments if they are to bring about the changes needed to preserve the resilience of the oceans and coastal areas, particularly those that are most vulnerable.

That is why I wish to reiterate here the importance of making full use of nuclear technology to achieve our common goal of sustainable management and preservation of the oceans and their resources.

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International scientific cooperation among all stakeholders in the promotion of nuclear technology for sustainable development and renewable energy is of critical importance.

In this regard, I welcome the Agency's commitment to seeking energy solutions. The collaboration agreement with the organization in charge of the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project, ITER, which Mr Amano shared with me at a recent meeting we had in Monaco, is a perfect example of this.

This innovative project, which aims to demonstrate the feasibility of nuclear fusion for peaceful purposes, has naturally held my interest since its inception, as it should eventually lead the way to a form of energy based on abundant resources that are distributed equitably across the planet.

That is why Monaco is also cooperating with the ITER project by funding conferences and hosting postdoctoral students working alongside experts and scientists on the construction and commissioning of the thermonuclear experimental reactor.

Finally, I would like to underline another crucial element in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals that you will be discussing here, namely health.

The development framework that we adopted in 2015 recognizes the key role of health in achieving sustainable economic and social progress for all States and all peoples of the world. It also recognizes, for the first time, the profound repercussions of non-communicable diseases on the world's population.

Of these diseases, cancer is one of the leading causes of morbidity and mortality in the world. It is a genuinely global health problem and the figures show that its prevalence is increasing rapidly, particularly in developing countries.

Nearly 13% of all deaths in the world are caused by these diseases, with over half of these occurring in developing countries.

As you know, the post-2015 development framework aims, by 2030, to reduce premature mortality due to non-communicable diseases, including cancer, by one third.

Nuclear technology, in particular radiotherapy, has a fundamental role to play in cancer treatment, as it is a proven technology.

Sustainable funding is therefore needed at the national and international levels.

Thanks to assistance provided by the IAEA through its Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT), many countries have now been able to acquire safe and effective radiotherapy equipment, allowing them to offer higher-quality treatment to patients.

Monaco has made an ambitious commitment to this programme, which brings together and harmonizes activities and investments related to cancer prevention, monitoring and screening, and early detection, treatment and palliative care for patients.

I assure you that my country will continue its unwavering support for the IAEA's activities related to nuclear technology applications in the service of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals

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“Concern for man and his fate must always form the chief interest of all technical endeavours”.

These words of Albert Einstein are now more relevant than ever.

I would like to reassure you of my country's full commitment to these activities. I am certain that, thanks to you, this Forum will provide an opportunity for fruitful discussions.

Thank you.