

***CHECK AGAINST DELIVERY***

**Statement by**

**H.E. Ambassador Aldrik Gierveld,**

**Permanent Representative of**

**the Kingdom of the Netherlands**

**to the International Atomic Energy Agency**

*17 September 2019, Vienna*

First of all, Madam President, I would like to express our deepest condolences on the passing of Director General Yukiya Amano to his family and to the staff of the IAEA. We greatly value his personal and professional contribution to the peaceful use of atomic energy. I trust that together we will honour his legacy.

I would also like to express our sincere condolences on the untimely death of Ms Baveille Hlongwa (Deputy Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy) to her family and to the people of South Africa.

Then, Madam President, let me join previous speakers in congratulating you on your presidency of this 63rd General Conference.

The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement of the European Union.

Madam President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

**[Peaceful use/ NPT/ NPT RevCon]**The use of nuclear material continues to grow worldwide. 450 nuclear power plants are up and running; some 50 more are under construction. The civil use of nuclear applications is increasing in all parts of the world. It brings great benefits in many fields, including health, food and agriculture and water management.

The Agency plays a key role both in the further development of the peaceful use of nuclear energy and in the assistance to Member States to apply these techniques through its Technical Cooperation Programme. The Netherlands always pays its share of the Technical Cooperation Fund on time and in full. Furthermore, the Netherlands is considering an extra-budgetary contribution to the work of the Agency in the field of peaceful uses.

Madam President,

The Netherlands fully supports the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy enshrined in Article IV of the

Non-Proliferation Treaty. The NPT is the cornerstone of our nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It has also been of crucial importance to foster the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes worldwide. We attach the highest priority to implementing and strengthening this regime, as a matter fundamental to international peace and security.

Therefore the Netherlands looks forward to a successful outcome of the upcoming Review Conference of the Treaty. Ambassador Marjolijn van Deelen and her team, who are also present here today, will do their utmost, in an inclusive and transparent manner, as Chair of Main Committee three. We call on all Member States to bring the spirit of Vienna to the deliberations in New York in May 2020.

### **[Safety and Security standards]**

Because of the globally growing use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, the IAEA faces an ever-increasing workload. Not only with regard to safeguards, but also in assisting Member States to uphold the highest safety standards and to implement all necessary security measures. The number of facilities around the world is growing. So are the amounts of nuclear material. It is crucial that we do our utmost to mitigate the risk of accidents, theft or malicious acts involving nuclear or radioactive material

In this regard, the Netherlands looks forward to a successful International Conference on Nuclear Security next year.

Another important moment for nuclear security is the 2021 review conference of the amended Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM). We encourage Parties to the Convention to inform the depositary, the Director General of the IAEA, about their laws and regulations that give effect to the Convention. The Netherlands will provide an update of its national report this year.

Madam President,

**[Non-Proliferation/ Safeguards]** Our non-proliferation and disarmament regime, of which the NPT is the cornerstone, can only function with a robust, modern and effective system of verification. In that regime the role of the IAEA is crucial. We, as Member States, must ensure that the Agency has the means and the tools necessary to carry out this essential task effectively and efficiently. That is why we call on Member States who have not yet done so to sign and ratify a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement and an Additional Protocol. These constitute the current standard of verification under the NPT.

Another important issue in the coming years is ensuring that the Agency has the capacity to address the steady growth of its safeguards tasks with a budget that is not increasing at a similar pace. To that end, we support the adoption and further development of state-level approaches, as a reflection of the need for a safeguards system that is responsive to change. We commend the IAEA for its demonstrated ability to adapt time and again to changing circumstances.

Madam President,

The Netherlands fully supports the Agency's role in verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The Netherlands deeply regrets the US withdrawal from the JCPOA and the subsequent re-introduction of US sanctions. Similarly, the Netherlands is very concerned by Iran's partial cessation of its nuclear-related commitments under the deal. We call on Iran to return immediately to full implementation of the JCPOA. The Netherlands also strongly encourages Iran to cooperate fully and timely with the Agency on JCPOA and on other safeguards matters.

Finally, Madam President, The Netherlands also commends the IAEA for maintaining its readiness to send inspectors to North Korea on short notice, should conditions permit.

Thank you Madam President