

Statement by His Excellency Majintha Jayasinghe  
Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Sri Lanka  
at the 64th Session of the IAEA General Conference  
Vienna, Austria 21 – 25 September 2020

Mr. President,  
Director General  
Distinguished Delegates,

- On behalf of the delegation of Sri Lanka it is a privilege and honour to congratulate you Mr. President on assumption of the Presidency of the 64<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

My delegation assures you Mr. President our fullest support to steer the deliberations of the Conference to achieve the tangible outcome.

- I am also pleased to inform that Sri Lanka has successfully contained the COVID – 19, with zero community transmission. Timely interventions, including travel restrictions, high testing rate, robust contact tracing, effective social distancing measures, and full mobilization of government resources, guided by visionary political leadership of H.E. the President are key to this success.
- We are grateful to the Agency for being partners of this success by providing diagnostic kits, equipment and devices to contain the spread of the virus. We encourage the Agency to continue to assist countries in their battle against COVID – 19.

Mr. President,

- As rightly pointed out by the Director General, COVID-19 will certainly not be the last pandemic to threaten the world. In fact, this pandemic is a stark reminder for us to take proactive measures in preventing or addressing future pandemics.
- In this context, Sri Lanka welcomes the proposal of the Director General for the establishment of a new IAEA Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action project (ZODIAC), with a global network of national diagnostic laboratories for the monitoring, surveillance, early detection and control of zoonotic diseases, using nuclear or nuclear-derived techniques.

Mr. President,

- IAEA safeguards are central to the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime. It is in this context that Sri Lanka wishes to emphasize that despite the pandemic, it is paramount that the IAEA maintain its safeguards implementation activities to ensure that nuclear material is not diverted from peaceful purposes.
- Sri Lanka also recognizes the pivotal role of the IAEA, as the central agency in facilitating nuclear techniques and energy for peaceful purposes.
  
- Our cooperation with the IAEA under the Technical Cooperation Programme and the IAEA's direct technical support, research and development, capacity building and expertise has facilitated the country to move into cleaner technologies, in making improvements in the agriculture and health sectors.
  
- While being cognizant of emerging trends and challenges in the nuclear field, Sri Lanka is keen to expand the use of nuclear and other technologies, in achieving accelerated economic growth and social development, as envisaged in the policy framework "Vistas of Prosperity and Splendour" of H.E. the President Gotabaya Rajapaksa.
  
- Nuclear safety and security will be a priority in this process, and Sri Lanka will continue to work closely with the Agency and other bilateral partners to this effect.
  
- As we progress on the implementation of the current phase of the technical cooperation programme in the country, Sri Lanka is keen to focus on strengthening of the regulatory infrastructure for radiation safety & source security.

Mr. President

- I wish to extend Sri Lanka's deep appreciation to the Director General Ambassador Rafael Mariano Grossi and to all of the staff of the IAEA who have worked with us over the past year.
  
- We look forward to an equally meaningful year ahead and to working with the IAEA in a spirit of cooperation.

Thank you