

**67th IAEA General Conference
Vienna, 27 September 2023**

**National Statement of the Republic of Cyprus
to be delivered by the Head of Delegation
H.E. Ambassador Maria Michail**

Madame President,

On behalf of the Delegation of the Republic of Cyprus allow me to join the previous speakers in congratulating you on your election and assure you of our support in discharging your responsibilities.

I would also like to express our appreciation to the Secretariat of the Agency, for their dedicated and professional work in an extremely challenging international context, under the stewardship of Director General Grossi, whom I would like to congratulate on his reappointment and assure of our continuous cooperation in service of the cause of “Atoms for Peace and Development”.

Madame President,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates,

Cyprus fully aligns itself with the Statement delivered by Spain, on behalf of the European Union and its Member States.

Against the backdrop of war in Ukraine, Cyprus condemns in the strongest terms any breach of international peace and security effected through military action by any state, against the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of another state.

On this instance of gross violation of international law and aggression against Ukraine, a reminder at the same time of the foreign aggression against Cyprus, the consequences of which are still sustained by its people, we firmly believe that it is our duty to stand on the right side of history.

Madame President,

Allow me to take this opportunity to briefly outline a number of priorities related to national targets, within the framework of our relation with the Agency.

Cyprus highly values the Technical Cooperation Programme in enhancing the responsible development of peaceful applications of nuclear technology and appreciates its contribution to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Cyprus has benefited over the years from projects funded by the Technical Cooperation Fund in terms of knowledge transfer and acquisition of expertise. Beyond the co-organised events, Cyprus currently has 2 National Projects for the current programme cycle and intends to continue with projects in future cycles.

Cyprus has welcomed experts provided by the Agency during the past months who have been building up our capacity for the cradle-to-grave management of sealed radioactive sources. We are grateful also to the Agency for providing equipment for the better management of disused radioactive sources and emergency preparedness and response.

We would also like to note that during the past year, the Regulatory Authority of Cyprus, with the support of the Agency, organised international meetings on safety and security. The Regulatory Authority and other Cypriot organisations have also participated in several meetings, conferences and international exercises of the Agency.

Madame President,

While no nuclear facilities operate in Cyprus, we recognise the importance of the Nuclear Safety and Security Standards of the Agency in ensuring nuclear safety and security worldwide.

To this direction, the Republic of Cyprus, as a Contracting Party to all major international Treaties and Conventions relating to nuclear safety and security, assures of its full commitment to their implementation.

Recognizing the considerable volume of work on nuclear safety and security, we urge all Member States to ensure the safety and security of nuclear facilities, so as to protect their own country, their neighbouring countries and the rest of the world.

We maintain that Member States should take all reasonable precautionary measures, given the potential for an act of war, a terrorist attack, loss of control or cyber-attack that could have devastating consequences beyond their own borders.

To this direction, we think it is important that Member States invite and facilitate Agency missions in a timely and systematic manner, while making sure of the full implementation of their recommendations and suggestions with the appropriate for this matter transparency.

Once again, Cyprus calls on all Member States and especially our neighbouring States to cooperate within the framework of their conventional obligations and exchange relevant critical information, benefitting also from the relevant platforms and channels provided by the Agency.

We strongly support at the same time the Agency's efforts on assistance and verification with respect to releases of radioactive material to the environment, maintaining the effective application of safety and security standards.

While for Cyprus nuclear safety and security remain in focus, we reiterate our support for measures and initiatives that strengthen and improve the application of safeguards, which remain an indispensable pillar for ensuring global peace and security.

Agency's role in this respect is highly valued and should continue unhampered. Trust in the International Atomic Energy Agency as an institution is of vital importance and we believe that all Member States should do their utmost to protect it.

At such a critical juncture for the international system of cooperation, we maintain our strong conviction that multilateralism should only be strengthened. In this context, we warmly welcome Cabo Verde and Gambia who have recently joined the Agency and our common efforts to collectively address global challenges.

Equally important though, is the facilitation of effective participation in the proceedings of the Agency. In this direction, Cyprus fully supports the initiative for effective application of sovereign equality of all Member States in the Agency's decision-making processes, not only in the letter but also in the spirit of relevant statutory provisions.

Concluding, I wish to again express our appreciation of the Director General and the Agency's staff work and to deliver our confidence and support in our common efforts to contribute to peace and development worldwide.

Thank you, Madame President.