

Portugal's Statement
67th General Conference of the IAEA
September 2023

Madam President, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Spain on behalf of the European Union and would like to add the following remarks in its national capacity.

Let me also start by congratulating you, Madam President, on your election and also congratulate Director General Rafael Grossi for his reappointment as Director General and thank him and the Secretariat for their excellent work over the past year. Portugal would also like to congratulate Cape Verde and Gambia for their membership at the Agency.

I deeply regret the fact that we meet here, again, still having as background Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine, its continued armed attacks on the Ukrainian territory and illegal seizure of Ukraine's Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP). These are flagrant violations of international law, including the UN Charter, and of the very principles of the Agency Statutes.

Madam President,

In this context, Portugal expresses its strong support for the efforts of the Director General Grossi regarding the nuclear safety, security, and safeguards in Ukraine and the dedicated work of the Agency staff under extremely challenging circumstances. Portugal remains deeply concerned that the Director General's seven indispensable pillars for ensuring nuclear safety and security during an armed conflict continue to be compromised as a result of Russia's war of aggression and that Russia is preventing the Agency from comprehensively assessing the situation at the ZNPP against the five principles established by the Director General and which must be respected.

Madam President,

Portugal urges the Russian Federation to comply with the Board of Governors' Resolutions and unconditionally withdraw all its armed forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine, notably from the ZNPP, and fully respect Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally recognised borders.

Madam President,

Portugal also reaffirms its continued support for the full and effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). We are increasingly concerned at Iran's continued actions inconsistent with the JCPOA and with severe, irreversible proliferation implications, some of which do not have any plausible civilian justification.

We urge Iran to return without delay to full JCPOA implementation, including all transparency measures and to cooperate in full with the IAEA without any further delay or conditionality to resolve all pending safeguards issues, in accordance with its legally binding obligations under its NPT Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement.

Madam President,

After hosting the IAEA Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS Mission) in 2021, Portugal requested the Agency, in the same year, to organize and carry out an Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel, Decommissioning and Remediation (ARTEMIS). So today, I have the pleasure to inform that the ARTEMIS Review Team, after conducting its review in May, considered that Portugal demonstrates the commitment and ability to enhance the safety of radioactive waste management and noted that a well-functioning system is in place.

Madam President,

We would also like to inform you that Portugal hosted, this August, in Lisbon, the Regional Workshop on Institutional Radioactive Waste Management, organized by the IAEA and the Portuguese Environment Agency (APA), which purpose was to discuss and share experience on technologies used for the management of institutional radioactive waste and in the development of dedicated facilities.

Madam President,

Portugal would like to stress its commitment to the Support of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, and its Guidance. In celebration of the 20 years of this unique, voluntary instrument, Portugal contributed with Country Group chairs to the 2023 Open-Ended Meeting of Technical and Legal Experts for Sharing Information on State's Implementation of the Code.

Portugal has also fulfilled its obligations under the Convention on Nuclear Safety by participating in the joint Eight and Ninth Review Meeting of Contracting Parties that took place earlier this year.

Still in the area of nuclear safety and radiation protection, in addition to working on the implementation of its National Action Plan, Portugal has actively participated in the IAEA review services, namely by supplying experts to integrate IRRS, EPREV and ARTEMIS missions to other countries, thus contributing to the continuous improvement of nuclear safety and radiation protection worldwide.

Madam President,

Portugal would also like to make a special mention of FORO, the Ibero-American Forum of Radiological and Nuclear Regulatory Bodies and highlight its activities since the last General Conference. We are pleased to report that the FORO has extended its action plan until 2025 and updated its activities and priorities to meet its security objectives, emphasizing the importance of the safety culture, the competences of the regulatory body and the risk

analysis applied to radiotherapy technique. Portugal believes it is important to stress the importance of the close cooperation of the FORO with the Agency, and reiterate our country's support for the activities of the FORO as a model to contribute to the exchange of experiences and knowledge in radiological and nuclear safety.

Madam President,

For more than sixty years, the IAEA has been performing an essential work for the benefit of Humanity, promoting the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world and, simultaneously, ensuring that its assistance is not used in such a way as to further any military purpose and contributing in a determinant manner to the accomplishment of the Sustainable Development Goals. These objectives remain equally relevant and challenging today and the leading role of the Agency in this regard is of the utmost importance.

Therefore, I take this opportunity to commend the work the Agency has been doing in the Seibersdorf Laboratories, especially on the context of the ReNuAL Project, to which Portugal has continuously contributed. Also, allow me to highlight the work of the Agency in the Programme Rays of Hope – Cancer Care for all. We are very impressed with the aims for this Programme and we believe it presents real opportunities for cooperation between our country and the Agency.

Madam President,

In this context, Portugal also reaffirms its strong support to the *Maria-Sklodowska Curie Fellowship*, to which we have the honour of contributing, therefore participating and assisting in the training and integration of young women on the nuclear science area. This project demonstrates that in every area is possible to develop efforts and crucial projects for the promotion of education and advanced training and for gender equality promotion.

Madam President,

Allow me to conclude by stressing, still in the area of the nuclear science and applications, the decisive contribution from the Institute for Nuclear Sciences Applied to Health (ICNAS), of the University of Coimbra, in Portugal, to the training in the area of the cyclotron operation and radiopharmaceuticals production. ICNAS was the first IAEA Collaborating Centre in the field of cyclotron radiopharmaceutical production as well as the first one dedicated entirely to field of radiopharmacy.

Portugal was honoured that ICNAS was part of the opening session of the International Symposium on Trends in Radiopharmaceuticals, that convened here in Vienna this year, where we were able to share our experience on this area and on the cooperation with the Agency. This is a cooperation that we feel should be preserved and even more enhanced, as Portugal believes that it provides an undeniable contribution to nuclear medicine.

Thank you very much for your attention and I wish a productive session of work on the next days.