

Sovereign Order of Malta

Statement by H. E. Ambassador Günther A. Granser

Permanent Observer to the United Nations and other International Organizations

At the 61st session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Vienna, 18 – 22 September 2017

President, Director General, Distinguished Delegates,

On behalf of the Delegation of the Sovereign Order of Malta, I would like to congratulate you on your election to the Presidency of the 61st Regular Session of the IAEA's General Conference. Our delegation is confident that under your able leadership, the Conference will accomplish its business successfully. Our delegation assures you all of its support and cooperation in ensuring that the Conference concludes its work successfully.

We would like to commend the Director General Yukiya Amano for his reelection and thank him and his team for tirelessly pursuing the agenda that nuclear technology is used for peaceful purposes. The peaceful use of nuclear technology continues to play a pivotal role in improving the lives of the less privileged throughout the world, particularly in the fields of Agriculture and Health in third world countries, which is an important aim of the Sovereign Order of Malta. It is against this background that the Order is committed in supporting the Agency in all its endeavors of pursuing the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

The Sovereign Order of Malta has its Government Headquarters in Rome. It is recognized as a subject of international law, has bilateral diplomatic and official relations at ambassadors level with over 106 countries, most of which are IAEA Member States, and multilateral relations also at ambassadors level with the European Union, the United Nations, where it has permanent observer status through a General Assembly Resolution of the year 1994 supported by all members of the General Assembly.

The Sovereign Order of Malta, as a over 900 years old institution inspired to help those in need, and with a mission to care without distinction of religion, race, origin and age, is involved in many countries assisting refugees, asylum seekers and internally displaced persons – the victims of wars, civil violence, religious persecution and natural disasters.

The Order provides a unique humanitarian network which is both a demonstration of its sovereignty and an operational instrument for its humanitarian activities which in fact can be called humanitarian diplomacy.

The Order carries out hospitaller and charitable missions throughout the world, in this connection I should particularly mention “Malteser International” which is the Order’s international relief organization for medical and humanitarian aid, operating worldwide. Especially mentioned now should be the activities in countries menaced by civil war and in assisting refugees and migrants crossing the Mediterranean in overloaded boats headed for Europe.

The Mediterranean Sea has become a mass grave for people desperate to reach the relative safety in Europe. The Order is on duty patrolling the sea on Italian navy vessels and rescuing survivors in dramatic circumstances of this perilous journey has become a daily duty for the Order’s emergency doctors.

The Order of Malta appreciates the Scientific Forum on “Nuclear Techniques in Human Health” which will highlight how nuclear science can improve people’s health and well-being as stated in Sustainable Development Goal 3, namely to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages.

For almost six decades, the Agency has carried out and continues to do so, an important and significant technical role favoring peace and security, and promoting the development of people. This approach is based on a multilateralism with a collective sense of security, capable of building a real climate of peace and trust for everyone as it is in the tradition of the Order of Malta in caring particularly for the sick and the poor, for those in need and for the most marginalized members of the society.

President,

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate the importance the Sovereign Order of Malta places on the successful cooperation of the Agency with other relevant International Organizations in ensuring the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies. The IAEA deserves continuous support as it seeks to fulfill, in ever more effective ways, its indispensable role in ensuring international security and the Order of Malta is committed to assure to the Agency its full support.

Thank you, President