

Sovereign Order of Malta

Statement by H. E. Ambassador Günther A. Granser

Permanent Observer to the United Nations and other International organizations

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President, Director General, Excellences, Distinguished Delegates,

At outset allow me on behalf of the Government of the Sovereign Order of Malta and my Delegation to congratulate you upon your election to preside over this General Conference. I also would like to congratulate to other members of the Bureau. I am confident that under your guidance and wisdom the Conference will succeed.

I take this opportunity to commend the leadership of the Director General Amano in ensuring the principal role of the Agency, as “Atoms for Peace” and at the service of mankind and its development and welfare and for the new important tasks coming up in the area of verification.

The Sovereign Order of Malta, the oldest humanitarian entity worldwide has its government headquarters in Rome. It is recognized as a sovereign subject of international law, and the sovereign status of the Order is one of the advantages which enable it to help those in need, whilst remaining independent and neutral, irrespective of political allegiances and so paving the way for what is called humanitarian diplomacy. The Order has bilateral diplomatic and official relations at ambassadors level with more than 105 States, most of which are IAEA Member States, the European Union and multilateral relations with the United Nations, where it has permanent observer status through General Assembly resolution A/RES/48/265 of August 24, 1994 supported by all members and observer status as well at all the other international organization of the UN family.

As a support of this it should be stressed that the Order of Malta has been following and supporting the activities of the Agency since 1998 in the area of nuclear science and technology with a focus to the health area. In fact we signed a Practical Arrangement in the PACT programme to support the advance of comprehensive, multidisciplinary cancer capacity building in low-and middle-income countries, starting in Albania. The Mission of the Order committed funds to support breast cancer control activities in an integrated, comprehensive manner through international cooperation.

This will further enhance the relations between the Sovereign Order of Malta and the Agency to support the advancement of cancer control in low-and middle-income countries.

Especially mentioned should be the activities of the Order in countries menaced by civil war and in developing countries. I should particularly mention “Malteser International” which is the Order’s

worldwide relief agency for humanitarian aid, with over 100 projects annually in all continents including the running of a vast number of assistance programmes for migrants and refugees.

A special focus is also the work of the Order with the Italian Coastguard to provide a rescue service at sea for migrants coming to the southern coast of Italy.

The big changes that have occurred worldwide in the last decades show how, in the arduous crossroads in which mankind finds itself, the commitment to support non-proliferation and to encourage the use of peaceful and safe nuclear technology for development, respecting the environment and ever mindful of the most disadvantaged people, is always more actual and pressing.

This approach has been always carried out by the Agency in its important and significant technical role favoring the peace and security, and the promotion of the development of people. It can be secured by a serious multilateralism based on a collective sense of security, capable of building a real climate of peace and trust for everyone also in the tradition of the Sovereign Order of Malta in caring particularly for the sick and poor, for those in need and for the most marginalized members of the society.

Finally, I would like to conclude by reaffirming the Sovereign Order of Malta's full commitment and cooperation to the Agency's objectives and purposes and its important and significant role in securing peace and security and promoting the development of people in need.

Thank you, President