



VIENNA CHAPTER

REMARKS AT G-77 HANDOVER CEREMONY 24TH FEBRUARY 2017

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Colleagues,
I am very pleased to join you to mark the handover of the Chairmanship of the Vienna Chapter of the G-77.

I congratulate Ambassador Najafi of the Islamic Republic of Iran on assuming the Chairmanship. And I thank the outgoing Chair, Ambassador Maruta of Namibia, for his successful term of office. I have greatly valued his cooperation and support.

G-77 countries are extremely important partners for the IAEA. You are active collaborators in everything we do. In my work as Director General, I have the privilege of visiting a dozen or more developing countries every year. Some developing countries have advanced capabilities in key areas of nuclear science such as radiotherapy and nuclear medicine and they are sharing their expertise with others.

As you know, improving cancer control in developing countries has been a high priority for me since I became Director General. That will remain the case. Specialist training – for doctors, medical physicists, nurses and researchers – is at the heart of what we do.

Many parts of the IAEA are involved in supporting individual countries in cancer control: our Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy –PACT –, our Division of Human Health, our regional technical cooperation desks, and our nuclear safety experts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,
Cancer control is just one of the many areas in which the IAEA transfers nuclear technology for peaceful purposes.

During this 60th anniversary year, we have been reflecting on the IAEA's achievements in helping countries to use many other applications of nuclear science and technology to meet their development goals. Since 2015, we have increasingly been delivering that assistance within the framework of the Sustainable Development Goals, including in energy, food and agriculture, industry, and water management, as well as in health. But our assistance also goes beyond the SDGs.

We are as responsive as we can be to Member State needs and take pride in our ability to respond quickly to crises, as we did last year following the outbreak of the Zika virus.

In order to deliver the services which Member States expect, we need sufficient resources.

I know I can count on the support of the G-77 countries in the discussions on the Agency's Programme and Budget for 2018-2019 which are now going on. It is important that we should secure at least a modest real increase in the Agency's budget so that we can maintain the balance in our activities.

For my part, I am very aware of the financial constraints in many Member States. We will not relax our efforts to implement efficiency measures to ensure optimal use of our limited resources. And we will maintain our focus on high-value activities with maximum impact.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The modernisation of the IAEA nuclear applications laboratories at Seibersdorf under the ReNuAL project is one of the most important initiatives ever undertaken by the Agency.

Since 1958, more than 48,000 scientists and engineers have held fellowships and scientific visitor positions through the IAEA technical cooperation programme, both at the Agency's laboratories, and in the facilities of our partners around the world.

The support of the G-77 countries has been vital for the success of ReNuAL. The project remains on schedule and within budget.

We are also receiving some support for ReNuAL+ but additional extra-budgetary funding is still needed. I ask all countries in a position to do so to contribute generously. And I thank all donors for the support which we have received so far.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Atoms for Peace and Development will remain the motto of the IAEA in the coming years.

I express my great appreciation for the very constructive role which the G-77 plays in the work of the Agency, and for the support which you have given to me personally.

I look forward to continuing to work closely with all of you.

Thank you.