



**REMARKS BY H.E DATO' GANESON SIVAGURUNATHAN  
CHAIRPERSON OF THE G77**

**VIRTUAL DIALOGUE WITH IAEA DIRECTOR GENERAL  
11 JUNE 2020, VIENNA**

His Excellency Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the IAEA.  
Excellencies Ambassadors of the Group of 77 and China  
Colleagues, Ladies and Gentlemen

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you this afternoon to Group's first virtual Dialogue session with the Heads of the Vienna based Organisations. I would like to express our sincere gratitude to HE Rafael Grossi, for making time today to engage with the G77 and China despite his busy schedule.

2. We wanted to organise this session earlier but with the spread of Covid 19, everything came to an almost stand still. However, it was not the case for the agency. We are pleased to note that despite the difficulties and challenges, the Agency have managed to find ways to operate in order to carry out its responsibilities as mandated.

3. The efforts of the Agency are certainly vital in this critical time as the world is struggling to overcome the dreadful implications of the spread of Covid-19. As we have seen, the impact of the Covid-19 has been severe on all countries. However, developing and least developed countries are the ones that are expected to suffer the most, due to the known reasons related to the development challenges they face, and the limited resources and capacities they possess.

4. Most countries will need assistance and support to deal with this situation, in terms of facilities and equipment, so that they will have the appropriate capacities to handle this situation. In this regard, we commend and appreciate the Agency's efforts and contribution from donor countries in providing assistance to Member States in their efforts to tackle the effects of the pandemic. We hope that these efforts will not diminish but will continue throughout the next stages of recovery in the medium and long term.

5. This virtual Dialogue session is one of the initiative undertaken by the Group to engage with the Heads of Vienna based Organisations. The Group in its letter to all VBOs dated 27 May 2020 have underlined recommendations and observations under the current extraordinary circumstances posed by the Covid-19 pandemic. I would like to highlight some of the issues briefly.

**First** is the need to review the calendar of meetings not only for is year but for next year too.

**Second**, there needs to be a prioritisation of the meetings. The utmost importance is to allow for the business continuity of the organisations.

**Third**, in scheduling and rescheduling of meetings, it is important to consider the capacities of the Missions, especially the smaller missions;

**Fourth**, meetings to be simplified and not business as usual. For example the conduct of the General conference;

**Fifth**, the economic impact on all states would mean that we would see lesser participation of experts from capitals.

6. With this remarks, I now would like to invite DG Rafael Grossi to deliver his opening remarks before I open the floor for comments.