



UNSC Open Briefing on TIPS (Nuclear safety and security in Ukraine), 30 May 2023

Malta Statement delivered by Ms Francesca Gatt,
Deputy Permanent Representative of Malta to the United Nations, New York

I thank you President. I also thank Director-General Grossi for his briefing.

As we have heard, the situation regarding nuclear safety and security in Ukraine continues to be of great concern. Since February 2022, the world has watched with worry as Russia has occupied Zaporizhzhia, Europe's largest nuclear power plant, as part of its aggression against Ukraine.

Let us not forget that the root of the problem is the illegal presence of Russian military personnel at the site. We stress the fact that without their presence, the situation we are discussing today would not exist.

With this in mind, it is deeply regrettable that military activities in and around the facility as a result of Russia's actions have placed the nuclear safety and security of the entire continent in jeopardy. As stated by Director-General Grossi, the situation is becoming increasingly unpredictable and consequently, more dangerous. Such risks are completely unacceptable.

While it remains occupied, the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has been operating with significantly reduced staffing numbers. It has been reported that the Ukrainian staff who are still there are working in extremely



challenging conditions, faced with intimidation, interrogation and even abduction in some instances.

A humanitarian corridor for the rotation of the management, operational, and repair staff of the power plant is an idea that should be given serious consideration to make sure that the station continues to function in a safe way.

We also note that in recent weeks there have been reports of evacuations from the town of Enerhodar, where most staff and their families live. This creates further uncertainty about the staffing situation. We welcome the presence of IAEA staff deployed to Zaporizhzhia and other Ukrainian power plants, but emphasise that this does not amount to a solution. Even in a shutdown state, the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant requires adequate maintenance and other work.

President

Since Russia's illegal invasion and occupation of the region last February, the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant and its surrounding area have been exposed to dangerous military activity. The power lines, essential to the operation and maintenance of safety of the plant, have been damaged on a number of occasions.

Malta deeply regrets that, despite assurances, Rosatom has not granted access for the IAEA to the Zaporizhzhia Thermal Power Plant, which has



provided back-up power for the Nuclear Power Plant in the past. Access for the IAEA must be granted urgently.

While we welcome the delivery of 200 Portable Power systems to Ukraine to compensate for frequent power losses, as well as the agreement reached earlier this month between the IAEA, France, and Energoatom for the delivery of necessary spare parts for emergency diesel generators of the South Ukraine Nuclear Power Plant we also underline the need for guarantees of uninterrupted power supply to the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant from the territory under the control of the Government of Ukraine.

President

Malta also welcomes the recent adoption by consensus of UN General Assembly resolution on the 'Persistent legacy of the Chernobyl disaster'. The adoption by consensus of this resolution is indicative of the importance placed by the international community on nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, and the significance of the serious long-term consequences of nuclear disasters.

The risks currently posed to nuclear safety and security in Ukraine, endangering the entire world, are a direct consequence of Russia's illegal, unjustified, and unprovoked war against Ukraine.



Once again, Malta reiterates its call on the Russian Federation to immediately cease its war of aggression and withdraw all its forces and military equipment from Ukraine's internationally recognised borders.

We also remain supportive of the IAEA's continued efforts to finding a permanent solution for the safety and integrity of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. In this regard, Malta welcomes the principles as outlined today, which constitute an important foundation to continue to build and guide future discussions.

Return of full legitimate control over the facility to the competent Ukrainian authorities, including demilitarisation and de-occupation of the ZNPP is a first priority. This is a key prerequisite for restoring not only nuclear safety and security but also respect for international law.

We thank the Director General for his relentless efforts and the experts that form part of the IAEA Support and Assistance Mission to the Zaporizhzhia (ISAMZ) for their valuable work.

I thank you.