

Gonzalo de Salazar Serantes

Ambassador and Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Spain
to the International Organizations in Vienna



Born in Madrid on 1963, he holds a degree in Information Science. In 1988 entered the diplomatic service. He has been itended at the Spanish Embassy in Ethiopia, Russia and Denmark. He was Head of the Department for Disarmament Affairs, Adviser at the Embassy of Spain in France and second in command at the Spanish Embassy in Poland. Since 2008 he was Deputy Director General of Non-Proliferation and Disarmament.

How are the Permanent Representation's actions coordinated across all the different organizations?

The most important factor for planning and coordination in multilateral forums is awareness of your own strategic goals from a global perspective, as defined by the national foreign policy strategy: where do we want Spain to be in the international arena, where do we want to go and how, on which principles, etc... Our strategic goals are defined in the Foreign Policy Strategy adopted by the Government of Spain. We have regular EU coordination meetings with our European partners to implement common EU policies.

In the Mission we implement these policies, interacting with our partners from across different continents. Obviously that also requires permanent interaction and coordination between members of the Mission's staff. I talk with all of them regularly.

Spain has had a Permanent Mission here since 1987. Since the creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency in 1957, Vienna has become home to a great number of committees, entities and multilateral agencies: the IAEA, UNIDO, UNODC, CTBTO, COPUOS, IACA, the Nuclear Suppliers Group, the Wassenaar Arrangement... The list is very long. Sometimes it's really difficult to attend all the meetings taking place in Vienna, and we are often over-stretched. But the Mission's staff are excellent and I am satisfied with the results so far.

How are the Representations organized at the different headquarters?

As you know, Vienna—along with New York, Geneva and Nairobi—is home to one of the four headquarters of the United Nations. Some of the topics included on their respective agendas are connected, and many de-

cisions or events in one of the cities has an impact or requires follow-up in another. Let me give you an example: the E3/EU+3 negotiations with Iran in Vienna. The Agreement signed on 14 July in Vienna is endorsed by a resolution passed by the UN Security Council in New York on 20 July. This resolution, UNSCR 2231, requests that the IAEA verify the agreement. So now we have the issue back on our agenda here in Vienna. Obviously, we had to follow this issue up when it was discussed in New York, and we report to each other regularly. This is just one example of the interaction between different Missions on both sides of the Atlantic. We often have cross-cutting issues with Geneva, too.

Moreover, all of us have something in common: we seek the same goals established by our strategy: to represent Spain and achieve our goals through multilateral diplomacy; to safeguard Spain's interests; to promote the presence of Spanish officials

in the organizations; to encourage the internationalization of Spanish firms and technology; and to participate in international cooperation in various fields. These actions are implemented in a manner that advocates for the effectiveness of multilateralism, which is the best instrument available for managing the challenges that the international community faces today.

What is the IAEA's role among the different organizations in Vienna?

The IAEA plays several key roles in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy, supporting the accomplishment of the Millennium Goals for social, economic and environmental development, and contributing to international peace and security through confidence-building measures called "safeguards". It has become a central actor in the international community and highly influential in multilateral issues. One of the features of the IAEA is that it covers technological, scientific, economic and political issues at the same time. The IAEA has become a "universe".

However, in recent years the IAEA has faced important challenges. The demand for technical cooperation from countries interested in initiating nuclear programmes keeps rising, due to the growth of energy consumption worldwide. The IAEA forecasts that energy consumption will rise 50% by 2030, with developing countries doubling and even tripling that percentage. Sole reliance on fossil fuels does not seem sustainable, and there is fierce competition to secure energy supplies. In many countries, potential instability in prices and supplies has led to nuclear energy plans being introduced as a means of ensuring a reliable energy supply, combined with renewable energy. Furthermore, since the Fukushima accident there has been rising insistence for the international community to review the safety standards and mechanisms of mutual trust and cooperation in the management of nuclear power plants, a call that has been answered with an increase in support for the measures that the IAEA has adopted to upgrade safety standards in nuclear infrastructure in order to prevent accidents. Moreover, the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiations (UNSCEAR) has also a role to play, and Spain is one of its members.

There is also growing awareness of new threats to national security, which has increased demand for activities and guidance in upgrading nuclear se-



curity and promoting a nuclear security culture. UN Security Council Resolution 1540 defines the framework for attaining these goals and has encouraged the international community to join forces. At present, Spain chairs the 1540 Committee in the UN Security Council, and the prevention of nuclear terrorism is among its responsibilities.

Finally, the need to prevent nuclear "military proliferation" in accordance with the NPT, in force since 1970, requires a confidence-building mechanism. Safeguards are the basic tool. But, as you can imagine, the number of countries with safeguard agreements and the number of nuclear facilities continue to grow all over the world.

More demand for services, more areas to cover, more responsibilities... require more resources and more trained personnel. Keeping up with changes in international circumstances is not always easy, either, and sometimes the IAEA's mandate is too tight. I think the IAEA also needs more support to face all of these challenges.

Helping the IAEA to achieve its goals and successfully deal with new challenges is a central feature of Spain's policy in Vienna. The fact that we are a member of the Board of Governors of the IAEA until 2017 allows us to get involved in the entire decision-making process.

What are the areas of most interest being worked on at present?

The motto of the IAEA's activities since the 1950s used to be Eisenhow-

er's "Atoms for Peace". Now we say it is "Atoms for Peace and Development".

The IAEA assists its Member States in planning the peaceful use of nuclear science and technology, by supporting the transfer of technology and knowledge to developing member States, thus allowing for the achievement of their established social and economic goals. The IAEA also establishes nuclear safety standards and, through the implementation of these, promotes a higher level of safety in the use of nuclear energy. The IAEA has an important role in providing "guidance" in areas such as nuclear safety. It supports training programmes, gives advice to countries that want to develop a nuclear programme, and also works in radiation protection issues in areas such as nuclear medicine, agriculture, water management, pest and plague control, etc.

Choosing areas of interest is always a subjective approach. But I must say I feel the importance of nuclear energy supply for a growing population worldwide, with increasing needs associated with economic and social development. More nuclear energy also means a growing demand for safety and security. Then there are areas of special interest such as nuclear medicine and plague control. We need to make an effort to make nuclear medicine accessible for all countries, given the rates of cancer in many regions without an adequate health system.



Credentials to CTBTO.

Finally, I would like to mention the plague control programme, which initially focused on the elimination of plagues in agriculture, but is now evolving towards health goals: reducing the impact of malaria or tsetse flies in regions where diseases are endemic.

What role can the Permanent Representation play in the development and internationalization of Spanish businesses?

One of our aims is to facilitate the internationalization of Spanish firms. Since the IAEA is a world reference in the nuclear sector, it is crucial that Spanish firms be aware of the vast opportunities that exist worldwide.

We encourage the Spanish nuclear sector to offer their services to the IAEA. Moreover, in order to encourage this participation, it is fundamental that we convey the benefits and results other countries are achieving through the IAEA.

In addition, as mentioned earlier, in recent years the number of countries interested in initiating a nuclear programme has increased significantly. This is an opportunity for our world-renowned nuclear firms to establish contact with representatives of countries that are looking for suppliers of goods and services. We should bear in mind that the IAEA is also a “meeting point”. Many delegates come to Vienna not

only to participate in committees, conferences, etc., but also to arrange meetings with potential commercial partners, get information, and meet the relevant decision-makers. When there is a project for which goods and services are needed, there can be a match-making process. As such, the permanent mission has, on the one hand, continued to promote Spain’s image as a reliable partner of the IAEA and, on the other, strengthened coordination efforts and relations with national bodies and the platforms that represent the interests of the Spanish corporate nuclear sector.

What is Spain’s role in international organizations?

Spain’s goal is to promote multilateral diplomacy in the most efficient way, to preserve global stability and security, and to foster mutually beneficial international cooperation between States.

We are among the main financial contributors to the UN system. In the IAEA, Spain ranks number nine in terms of budgetary contributions. We also contribute considerably to multilateral organizations through EU programmes. Contributions in kind, in the form of experts, workshops, other international events, and training programmes for foreigners at Spanish universities, are among the most important. We also have an advantage in speaking a language shared with 20 countries and over 400 million people. Very often Spanish experts are sought out by organizations to participate in activities through which they share their highly qualified professional skills with Spanish-speaking participants from other countries.

Spanish officials in these organizations are also a very important asset, and they constitute a bridge between the organizations and the Mission. They offer their experience and their professional skills to benefit the international community. The human factor is one of the most important assets that we have.

But let me add that in multilateral forums, as in our foreign policy, we always take the “global goals” of the international community into account. One of the lessons you learn in diplomacy is that all countries, big or small, are important. Diplomacy must not be a zero-sum game, but a win-win interaction, and we should listen to each other more.

How can Spain work with the IEAE to help those countries that are taking



Credentials to the United Nations (Vienna)

the first steps towards developing nuclear energy?

The Spanish nuclear programme is ranked twelfth in the world, and boasts a long track record. This means that Spain would be able to collaborate with the IAEA by sharing our experience and the lessons learnt over the past decades with those countries that are introducing nuclear power now. Such collaboration could take the form of participation in technical platforms organized by the IAEA. The development of strong networks would be at the forefront, since these would enable the creation of safe and sustainable nuclear power programmes.

Where to Spanish businesses stand in comparison with their competitors?

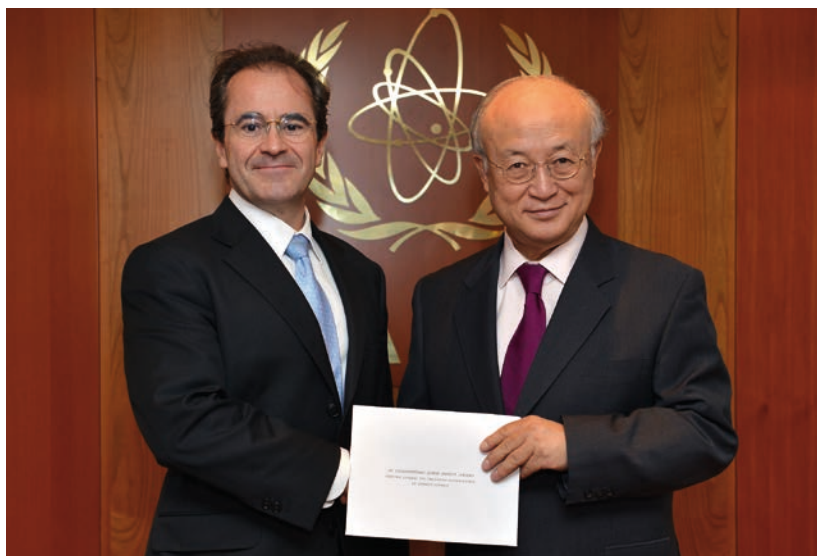
Spain is one of the most advanced countries in the use of nuclear energy, its legal framework, its infrastructure and the ample experience of the private and public sector. Its nuclear industry is one that spans from reactor building to the supply of fuel, capital goods or engineering services, resulting in a sector which is technologically versatile and competitive.

The Spanish nuclear industry is characterized by its potent internationalisation, as reflected by the strategic decision to export 70% of activities and our participation in nuclear projects in 40 different countries. Furthermore, Spain is a world reference in radioactive waste management and nuclear decommissioning, an achievement that is reflected by the support services that Spanish nuclear firms provide in the operation and maintenance of nuclear facilities in more than 20 countries.

What initiatives should be taken to raise their profile?

One way to obtain a greater presence would be through collaboration between Spanish firms and the IAEA. To do so, Spanish firms should, first of all, be mindful of the vast opportunities that the IAEA offers, particularly in terms of technical cooperation and internationalization. Crucial for this awareness is to continue promoting the vital role the IAEA can play in a firm's development and to improve the flow of information between firms in the nuclear sector and platforms that facilitate access to the programmes offered by the IAEA. Since the IAEA is a global reference in the nuclear sector, collaboration with it would gain worldwide acknowledgement for the firm's brand.

From an international perspective, are you optimistic about the future of nuclear energy?



Credentials to IAEA.

Many countries regard nuclear energy as a means of contributing to a nation's welfare and facilitate its sustainable development. At the same time, there has been a decrease in confidence in nuclear power in a number of countries, partly as a result of the Fukushima accident. Some countries tend to reduce the proportion of nuclear power in the national energy mix and increase the role of renewable energy. In recent years, the Fukushima accident has negatively influenced the population's perception of the use of nuclear energy.

However, a growing number of governments also consider nuclear energy as an alternative to mitigate the effects of climate change and the impact of volatile fossil fuel prices, as well as an essential component of an energy mix

to ensure a stable energy supply. This is reflected in the number of power reactors currently in operation—438 units—and the 67 reactors currently under construction. The tangible benefits, along with a global focus on safety and security procedures in recent years, have influenced some countries to continue their expansion plans and have inspired several others to introduce nuclear power. As the number of nuclear power reactors continues to grow in an increasing number of countries, demand for services, safety and security will also grow. The benefits of nuclear energy remain within the grasp of many states, and they continue to consider that a safe and responsible use of nuclear energy is the answer to the many challenges that the modern world faces today. ■



Credentials to UNIDO.