

**Mr. President, Dr. Ibrahim Othman**  
**H. E. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General, IAEA**  
**Excellencies**  
**Distinguished Delegates**  
**Ladies and Gentlemen**

The Bangladesh delegation congratulates you and others in the bureau most warmly upon your election and assures you of its full support.

I also bring you and to this august assembly, greetings from our Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina. She reiterates her firm commitment for the peaceful use of nuclear energy for the advancement of our quality of life, and conveys her appreciation to Director General Mohamed ElBaradei and his staff for their unstinted co-operation. We also take pleasure in welcoming amidst us our three new members.

The recently concluded Millennium Summit of the United Nations reached the welcome consensus on the need to eradicate the scourge of poverty. It also underscored the imperative that development endeavours must be environment friendly and sustainable. The services of science and in particular nuclear technology should be pressed to that end.

**Mr. President**

The programs of Bangladesh relating to peaceful use of nuclear technologies are focused on various sectors of national economy that demand urgent attention. One such program worth mentioning is the Investigation of arsenic contamination of ground water, a problem that has assumed massive proportions. We plan to use a combination of conventional and nuclear techniques in this regard and we have already initiated a R&D Project. This will hopefully provide us with information and data that are needed for capacity building for efficient management of our ground water resources.

Another is the assessment of pesticides in some of the food items. The activities under the project are intended to cover the entire country. This will help determining the optimum use of pesticides and thus arrest damage to the human and animal health as well as to the ecology. In the health sector, fourteen nuclear medicine centres are now operational, providing diagnostic and other services to about 125,000 patients annually. We are also improving the quality of this as well as other services like Non Destructive Testing and analyses using nuclear techniques. These are implemented through regulation of activities, human resource development and dissemination of selected nuclear techniques.

An important element of our overall program is to ensure nuclear safety and radiation control. The law and a set of regulations have been enacted with this in view. Activities in this field are now concentrated on the development and strengthening of the infrastructure including the licensing of radiation facilities. Training program in this regard is intensive and takes into account the needs of the users and the regulators. We must, however, confess that the existing organizational arrangement does not ensure the desired independence of regulatory functions from the promotional ones. We will soon create a separate regulatory agency.

The on-going regulatory activities are being strengthened with the support and assistance of the IAEA Model Project. We understand that the IAEA would initiate a separate project on strengthening the radiation safety infrastructure under the RCA framework. We are willing and ready to participate in it.

**Mr. President,**

The Government under the dynamic leadership of the Honourable Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina has taken a firm decision to expedite the implementation of our nuclear power program. We have already formally launched the Nuclear Power Action Plan. We plan to invite international bids for our first nuclear power plant. The draft Request For Proposal Document and an updated site report have already been prepared by the BAEC. We are

contemplating the formation of a separate agency namely Nuclear Power Authority of Bangladesh. The legal basis for this agency is being formulated now.

WE have always perceived technical assistance program of the IAEA in Bangladesh as being key to our plans. We would like to record our sincere appreciation for the support being provided continuously by the IAEA. Human resource development and project oriented technical assistance need special reference in this context. It is our fond hope that this would continue.

**Mr. President**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

Bangladesh has been actively involved in various projects under the RCA. The RCA programs provide excellent opportunities for sharing experience, expertise and resources on a regional basis. These have been found to be very effective and responsive to our needs. The programs have made significant contributions to the development of R&D infrastructure, human resource development. The Government of Bangladesh hopes that the activities of RCA must not only continue but also diversify and intensify. We wish to express our appreciation of IAEA, UNDP and other partners involved in the RCA.

Bangladesh shares the aims and goals of the IAEA in the general area of nuclear policy. We will continue to make positive contributions and co-operate with the Agency in every possible way. We shall also continue to play an active role in the sphere of non-proliferation. It gives me great pleasure in informing this august gathering that our government has transmitted to the IAEA our approval to the Additional Protocol and our decision to sign it. This underscores our abiding commitment to our total and unconditional support to the entire range of the non-proliferation regime. An expression of our support to CTBT is our consent to the establishment of a seismic station in Bangladesh.

**Mr. President**

**Ladies and Gentlemen**

We observe with a modicum of apprehension that the promotional activities of the Agency are being gradually reduced in comparison with the safeguards programs. This strategy could one day undermine the overall impact of the agency in promoting peaceful uses of atomic energy. This could also discourage some countries like Bangladesh who have total support to non-proliferation but at the same time are interested in the use of nuclear technologies including nuclear power. In particular, the role of the IAEA in the sphere of clean development mechanism needs to be underscored. Thus, it is important to find a way to strike a fair balance between promotional and regulatory activities of the Agency. Future budgets must reflect this aim. It will undoubtedly go a long way towards the achievement of our goals.

I thank you all.