

**STATEMENT**

**By Prof. Jerzy NIEWODNICZANSKI**

**President of the National Atomic Energy Agency**

**POLAND**

**on the occasion of the**

**44th SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE**

**of the**

**International Atomic Energy Agency**

**Vienna**

Mr. President,

Mr. Director General,

Your Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Polish delegation, let me first join previous distinguished speakers and congratulate you on being elected to the office of President of the forty-fourth annual session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. I should like to assure you of the full support and co-operation of my delegation in the fulfillment of your important responsibilities. I am sure that under your presidency the discussions of the Conference will be constructive and produce positive results.

I would also like to use this opportunity to welcome three new IAEA members:

Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and the Central African Republic, wishing them to become active contributors to the co-operation in peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Poland is ready to share with them its long experience in this field.

On behalf of my delegation I should like to associate myself with the statement made by the distinguished representative of France on behalf of the European Union. Poland, being one of the States associated with the European Union, fully shares the common views presented in that statement.

Mr. President, distinguished Delegates,

In one hundred days the present century will come to the end. The century of great discoveries in physics which have enormously increased a human understanding of our universe, of structure of matter and of processes governing the world. These discoveries have not only led to practical applications changing completely our industry and everyday life, but they have also created a real danger to the human race at a global scale. Unfortunately, passing century has gained its name of "the age of atom" mainly not due to the benefits originated from various uses of nuclear energy, but in connection with tragedies of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Chernobyl accident. This is why the legal system, based on broadly accepted international conventions, aimed at non-proliferation of

atomic weapons and at better safety culture in peaceful applications of nuclear technologies as well as national regulations and existence of such organisations as the IAEA are so important.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 2000 NPT Review Conference had a largely acclaimed success consisting in an achievement of a consensus Final Document. While the compromise very often — and that time as well — requires sacrifices from negotiating parties, also the NPT Conference Final Document contains some wordings which are not as sharp and clear as one would have wished, e.g. concerning export controls, assessment of safeguards inspections in some regions of the world, dismantling of nuclear weapons, etc. Nevertheless, the IAEA Member States may have satisfaction receiving from the Conference a practical guidance indicating that all major safeguards issues have been confirmed and the implementation steps endorsed. The Final Document has recognised the IAEA safeguards — being a fundamental pillar of the nuclear non-proliferation — as an element which plays an indispensable role in the implementation of the Treaty. Moreover, the Conference reaffirmed that the implementation of comprehensive safeguards agreements together with Additional Protocols is designed to provide credible assurance about the non-diversion of nuclear materials from declared activities. In this connection I am pleased to report that this year the Additional Protocol to the Agreement between Poland and the IAEA for the Application of Safeguards has entered into force and its mechanisms have started to be implemented. We call upon the countries which have not yet done so to join the integrated IAEA safeguards system as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

The International Atomic Energy Agency for years has been playing a vital role in the promotion of nuclear safety worldwide, strengthening a global nuclear safety culture. Over years it has developed legally binding international conventions as well as internationally accepted safety standards with regard to nuclear safety and radiation protection; it has also elaborated measures to assist States in the implementation of these conventions and standards. It should be noted with satisfaction that all countries operating nuclear power plants have by now ratified the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and — with the exception of two — the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency and the Convention on Nuclear Safety. Only three more States need to ratify the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel

Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management in order to make it operational. My country already being a party of other mentioned above conventions, transmitted the instrument of ratification of the Joint Convention to its Depository on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2000.

Such conventions — among others — give less advanced countries the possibility to be assisted in building and strengthening of their nuclear safety infrastructure, enabling at the same time a promotion of uniform, globally harmonised level of the safety requirements. A recent example of an initiative of that nature was a proposal made in April this year by the International Nuclear Safety Advisory Group, to add a protocol to the Convention on Nuclear Safety covering also research reactors by its provisions. We fully support that initiative.

As regards elaboration of the agreed safety standards we should like to commend the Secretariat for initiating discussions on a possible Code of Conduct on the Safety of Radiation Sources and the Security of Radiological Materials. A wide variety of applications of these sources in industry, medicine, research and environmental protection, and consequently wide scope of associated risks of external radiation exposure, justify preparation of such a Code of Conduct. It should be recalled in this context that there has been a number of accidents with serious, even fatal consequences, during the use of radiation sources and of radioactive materials.

Mr. President,

Poland accords the highest priority to the Agency's activities in the field of physical protection. Recognising the importance of the binding for more than twelve years Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials, my delegation considers that it is reasonable now — in the context of changes which have taken place during that time — to strengthen efforts towards preparing an internationally binding instrument which might regulate the physical protection of nuclear materials also in use and in storage.

The issue of illicit trafficking of nuclear materials and radiation sources is intimately linked to the efforts of the international community to ensure the proper accountancy, control and protection of such items. Poland welcomes the IAEA activities in the field of prevention, detection and response undertaken in support of efforts against that so called “nuclear terrorism”. We can ensure that apart from having an appropriate domestic system in that respect, almost 100% of border check points are

now properly equipped and no significant amount of illegal materials has been registered at our border.

Mr. President, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let us turn now to the other Agency's activities. Poland highly appreciates the Secretariat actions undertaken in order to strengthen the technical co-operation between the Agency and its Member States as well as, under the Agency's auspices, among the Member States themselves. We support new initiatives proposed by the Secretariat to make that process more efficient and profitable both for recipients and donors, among them in particular successive steps recommended to be introduced by the Technical Co-operation Strategy. Among them, it is worth mentioning the "Partners in Development" concept, which is even more successfully implemented by means of Regional Agreements, even not formally signed, like in case of Europe. Poland — as many other countries of the region being both donor and recipient IAEA Member State — since years has actively and successfully participated in various activities of that kind, offering e.g. its research centres for training carried out under the auspices of the IAEA.

Mr. President, distinguished Delegates,

With great interest we follow other new policy initiatives prepared by the Agency's Secretariat with such key words like "matrix management", "performance indicators" "result-based approach" and "one-house concept", etc. We do hope that all these improvements will lead to better use of limited resources of the Organisation while at the same time the appropriate balance in funding of the Agency's regulatory and promotional activities will be maintained. Particularly, we attach a great importance to a proper defining of the topics and activities contained at the Agency's Major Programmes. In this respect we have strongly supported an incorporation of Nuclear Sciences into the Major Programme I connected with nuclear power, believing that there is no future for a nuclear energy option without profound scientific basis. However, we are now concerned by a possibility that such a move could lead to a complete attachment of scientific topics to nuclear power technologies only, separating such fields like use of research reactors and accelerators, nuclear and atomic analytical methods and different industrial applications of nuclear technologies from the Major Programme II. Such a separation could be even more probable through placing responsibility for nuclear sciences with the DDG dealing with nuclear power. Poland belonging to the family of non-

nuclear power countries is very much interested in as wide as possible development of nuclear non-power technologies in all the fields, not limiting them to human health, agriculture and environmental protection only.

Mr. President,

We appreciate a new public information policy of the Agency. There is indeed a need to enhance the Agency's interaction with opinion leaders, the media and civil society, especially in matters related to nuclear power. There usually exists a tendency to passing nuclear power over in important statements related to energy and environmental protection policy. For example, in the report by the Secretary General of the United Nations "The Peoples — the Role of the United Nations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century", issued this year, in its chapter: "Coping with climate danger", there is no simple mentioning of nuclear power among a long list of measures to be undertaken in order to reduce carbon emissions. On the other hand, the June 2000 issue of the IAEA Bulletin devoted to sustainable energy development represents in our opinion a new, higher quality of this important periodical publication by the IAEA. It contains a comprehensive review of potential contributions of nuclear power to sustainable energy development.

We would also like to congratulate the Secretariat on preparing — in accordance with the Member States requests — the "Nuclear Technology Review". Over years there have been various forms of informing systematically the Agency's Member States about developments in the world on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. This new publication together with the similar Nuclear Safety Review issued every year covers the whole subject quite completely. In this context we hope that our suggestions presented during the June Board meeting will be taken into account in the next edition of this document.

Mr. President,

Poland supports a zero real growth of the Agency's budget, nevertheless, we understand that the use of such a policy for years has produced a situation in which the implementation of the IAEA approved programme very often relies on extrabudgetary resources, making comprehensive planning activities difficult and less efficient. Moreover, a low level of payments of some Member States contributions, both to the Regular Budget and — even more — to the Technical Co-operation Fund does not contribute to an improvement of that grave problem. This is why various proposals for General Conference resolutions on the financing of safeguards and the financing of technical co-operation have been examined recently by the Board of Governors. Poland as a member of the BoG has participated in the preparation works and we consider the proposed resolutions to be of benefit for the Agency's financing.

Being aware of the importance for the IAEA technical assistance programme proper implementation of full amount of pledged — and paid — contributions to the Technical Co-operation Fund, I am pleased to announce that my government is prepared to pledge and pay — as every year up to now — the target calculated according to the present principles of a Polish contribution to that Fund.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me take this opportunity to congratulate the Director General, Dr. ElBaradei, and his staff for another year of their successful work. Poland is confident that the Agency will continue to play a key role in the world in the new millennium.

Thank you for your attention.