

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Government of Sweden, I would like to extend our warmest congratulations on your election as President of the 44<sup>th</sup> General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. I am confident that your wise leadership will guide this conference to a successful conclusion. I would also like to warmly welcome Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, and the Central African Republic, which join us as new member states.

Mr. President,

Sweden associates itself with the statement made by France on behalf of the European Union. Therefore, I shall only highlight a few areas of special importance to Sweden.

Mr. President,

Sweden regards the 2000 Conference of the Parties to the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty as a resounding victory for the NPT regime. To paraphrase the Swedish Foreign Minister, Ms. Anna Lindh, in her statement to the General Debate of the UN General Assembly last week, it is the first time in many years that a consensus document on the agenda for nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament could be adopted. It is also the first time ever that the nuclear-weapon States have pledged unconditionally to eliminate totally their nuclear arsenals and the first time that a catalogue of practical steps was identified on how to work towards this goal. Sweden belongs to the overwhelming majority of states that see the consensus final document of the NPT review conference as the basis for further progress in nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation. We expect all States to live up to their commitments.

Sweden, as many others, also regards the 2000 NPT Review Conference as a vote of confidence in the Agency's role in promoting nuclear non-proliferation. In terms of verification, the NPT Review Conference called for a continuation of the trilateral initiative and for the further development of methods of verification for the achievement and maintenance of a nuclear-weapon-free world. Sweden sees a growing role for the Agency as nuclear arsenals continue to diminish and further States join in a moratorium and — soon, we hope - in a ban of the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons and other explosive purposes. We urge all States which have not yet done so, to become parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty without further delay.

Mr. President,

At the NPT review conference, the States Parties also reaffirmed the fundamental role played by IABA safeguards in the non-proliferation regime, and the importance of a strengthened safeguards system based on Additional Protocols. We urge all countries that have not already done so, to sign and ratify Additional Protocols. The development and implementation of the new, integrated safeguards approach is a matter of highest priority to us. Through its IAEA safeguards support programme, Sweden provides assistance to the Secretariat in these efforts.

Mr. President,

Sweden assigns a high priority to international co-operation to ensure full implementation of international standards and good practices with regard to the physical protection of nuclear materials and the combating of illicit trafficking. Primarily, this is a national responsibility, and Sweden assists several States in Central and Eastern Europe as well as Central Asia in this regard under the Swedish Security-enhancing support programme. But Sweden also believes that the IAEA has an important role to play. We are looking forward to the findings of the open-ended working group which is currently assessing the need to revise the Physical Protection Convention. Sweden would also like to use this opportunity to extend a warm welcome to all Member States to attend the 2001 IAEA Conference on “Security of Material – Measures to Prevent, Intercept and Respond to Illicit Uses of Nuclear and Radioactive Sources” to be hosted by Sweden in Stockholm from 7-11 May 2001.

Mr. President,

Sweden regards the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management as cornerstones in an international nuclear safety regime. We urge all Member States, that have not already done so, to accede as soon as possible to the two conventions. In this context, Mr. President, Sweden is convinced that the IABA has a very important role to play as a driving force in nuclear and radioactive waste safety, *inter alia* through its Safety Standards programme and through its review services. We share the concerns expressed by the IABA and its advisory group INSAG about the safety status of research reactors in some countries. We urge the Agency to pay continued attention to these issues, including exploring possibilities to strengthen the international legal regime in this area. Sweden, on its part, has declared that it voluntarily applies the Convention on Nuclear Safety also to its research reactors, and invites other countries to do the same. We also urge the Agency to pay close attention to the special safety management challenges that arise when a decision is taken to close down a nuclear power

reactor at a certain future time. An increasing number of reactors will approach the end of their technical and economic life in the coming decades, and decisions to close down reactors are also taken for other reasons.

Mr. President,

There are different views among Member States as to the role of fission technology in a long term sustainable development perspective. Sweden believes that it is important that the Agency in documents such as the Nuclear Technology Review takes a well balanced approach to these issues. The Agency should in our opinion not only present the reasons for using fission technology as a part of a sustainable national energy supply programme but also the reasons why a number of governments, including Sweden's, have decided not to include fission technology as an eligible option in a long-term, sustainable energy supply programme. In this manner, Agency publications would become still more useful to governments considering various options in their long-term strategies for sustainable development, and facilitate giving nuclear technology a truly fair hearing. Moreover, it is the opinion of the Swedish government that the issue of the eligibility of nuclear power under the trading mechanisms of the Kyoto protocol should be formally addressed only in the proper fora established in the protocol for such discussions.

Mr. President,

In recognition of the importance Sweden attaches to the Agency's Technical Co-operation activities it is my pleasure to announce that Sweden has pledged its full share to the Technical Co-operation Fund for the year 2001. To ensure a sound financing of the Agency's Technical Co-operation Programme, Sweden has repeatedly maintained that the first priority should be to reduce and eliminate the gap between the budget target and actual payments to the Technical Co-operation Fund. We therefore agree with the recommendations on the financing of technical co-operation adopted by the Board of Governors last week. We hope that a rapid closure of the gap between the budget target and actual payments now can be achieved, preferably even faster than in the recommendations. We urge all States to pledge and pay their assessed shares in full and on time.

Mr. President,

In accordance with decisions adopted at the 43<sup>rd</sup> IAEA General Conference, Sweden has informed the Depositary State of its ratification of changes to Article VI and Article XIV of the Statutes of the Agency. Finally, Mr. President, I take this opportunity to congratulate the Director General, Dr. ElBaradei, and the staff of the IAEA for another successful year.

Thank you, Mr. President!