

# **The Forty-seventh Regular Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)**

## **Statement by Ambassador Arne Walther, Norwegian Delegation**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Norwegian delegation, I would like to join previous speakers in congratulating you on your election as president of the 47<sup>th</sup> IAEA General Conference, wishing you every success in your task and to ensure you of our full support.

I would also like to compliment Director General Dr ElBaradei and his staff on the excellent and highly professional way they have prepared and are managing this conference. It is not without good reason that the IAEA often is referred to as one of the best run agencies in the UN family.

Mr. President, distinguished delegates,

Norway associates itself with the statement made by Italy on behalf of the European Union. Let me further highlight some perspectives of particular importance to my country.

The Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is a cornerstone of our common collective security. We share the concerns expressed by previous speakers. The Treaty is indeed facing serious challenges.

Thus we deeply deplore the announcement by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea of its intention to withdraw from the Treaty. We reiterate our call to the DPRK to reverse its course of action, to comply with its obligations under the NPT and to co-operate fully and unconditionally with the Agency. A solution to the current situation must be found through dialogue.

All allegations of non-compliance with the NPT regime must be dealt with in a transparent manner. This also applies to the case of Iran. The Agency must be allowed to complete its work as called for by the Board of Governors in their resolution last week.

The unconditional conclusion of an Additional Protocol to Iran's Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA, its early entry into force and immediate implementation is a matter of the greatest importance. This would be as a manifest sign of Iran's commitment to non-proliferation and of its desire to restore international confidence in its peaceful intentions.

We have taken due note of the Director General's latest report to the Board of Governors. We welcome the assurance that Iran seems to be prepared to work more closely with the IAEA. There is an urgent need for continued investigations to fully verify the Iranian nuclear programme.

Mr. President,

The IAEA's international safeguards system is an essential part of the multilateral non-proliferation regime. We must continue our efforts to strengthen this system and ensure that it functions well. Adequate funding must be provided.

Norway will work to strengthen IAEA safeguards during the process leading up to the NPT Review Conference in 2005. The non-proliferation regime should be strengthened through universal application of the IAEA safeguards system. The norm should be that any country seeking nuclear technology for a peaceful programme must fully implement comprehensive IAEA safeguards and conclude an Additional Protocol. Let this be a key message from the 2005 conference.

Norway has several years of experience in implementing its Additional Protocol, being the second Member State after Australia to apply integrated safeguards. Norway and Australia are now in the process of establishing a bilateral programme to enhance understanding and improve implementation of both traditional and integrated safeguards. We are pleased to know that integrated safeguards are now implemented in Indonesia as well. We urge other Member States to follow suit.

Export controls are crucial for our non-proliferation efforts. Norway strongly believes that national implementation of export controls is an important means of preventing non-state actors and terrorists from acquiring sensitive nuclear materials or technology. We have therefore taken several steps to strengthen our national export control system.

Nuclear security is an integral part of the fight against terrorism and the spread of weapons of mass destruction. Improving the safety and security of radioactive sources is essential as a way of preventing such material from falling into the hands of terrorists.

Mr. President,

No place in the world is the concentration of nuclear installations greater than in northwestern Russia. Since 1995, Norway has contributed with more than USD 100 million to assisting Russia secure its nuclear waste and spent nuclear fuel. Norway has joined the G8 Global Partnership. This Partnership is crucial for building a broad international coalition against the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction.

The signing of the multilateral framework for assistance to nuclear safety projects in Russia – the MNEPR agreement – in Stockholm on 21 May this year has made it possible to transform international initiatives such as the Global Partnership into concrete action. Co-ordinated action, for example through the Contact Expert Group, under the auspices of IAEA should make it possible to arrive at an efficient division of labour between donors so that we can better deal with the enormous challenges facing us in the north as regards environmental issues and non-proliferation.

The dismantling of decommissioned nuclear submarines has high priority. The sinking of a decommissioned Russian submarine off the Kola Peninsula recently was a tragic reminder of the urgency of this task. Norway has financed the dismantling of two Russian submarines. We hope that also other countries will contribute to these efforts.

Mr. President,

The IAEA is playing an important role in preventing the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction by promoting the secure handling and storage of radioactive material. This was highlighted during the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources here in Vienna in March this year. Norway fully supports the conclusions of the conference and commends the IAEA's efforts to promote the implementation of the Code of Conduct on the

Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. These efforts will help Member States take the action necessary to ensure that radioactive sources are kept safe and secure.

My delegation joins other delegations in fully supporting the Agency's action plan to combat nuclear terrorism. Norway has contributed USD 60 000 to subprogramme K6 on nuclear and radiological emergencies. We urge Member States to take steps at a national level to keep nuclear and radioactive material secure and to be prepared for responding to emergencies.

We welcome the establishment of the National Competent Authority Co-ordination Group (NCACG) and the decision to develop an action plan to enhance international nuclear and radiological emergency preparedness and response system. Norway has taken on the responsibility for chairing this group. We urge all Member States to make their contributions to the development and the approval of the action plan.

Physical protection of nuclear material is another aspect of nuclear security and the prevention of nuclear terrorism. Norway supports the efforts to strengthen the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We welcome the Austrian initiative to amend the Convention.

Norway is grateful to the IAEA for the efforts it has put into the development of the international physical protection advisory service (IPPAS). Norway has requested the assistance of this valuable IAEA service. We will be welcoming an IPPAS team to Norway later this month to carry out an evaluation of Norwegian physical protection systems. The assistance of this service in Member States will contribute to improve basic regulatory approaches and standards internationally. To facilitate further work on security and physical protection, Norway will make a voluntary contribution to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund.

Mr. President,

Many states are concerned about uncertainties associated with maritime transport of radioactive materials. Accidents involving the release of radioactivity into the environment could have serious consequences. Such shipments cause controversy and attract public attention worldwide, not least in coastal states.

Norway supports the call for further efforts to examine and improve international regulations relevant to maritime transport of radioactive material. At the same time international calls for more effective enforcement by flag states, port states and coastal states must continue. Efforts should continue as well to ensure the universal acceptance of and adherence to existing instruments such as the Law of the Seas Convention, the SOLAS and MARPOL conventions and the IAEA's Regulations for the Safe Transport of Radioactive Material and other relevant conventions.

Norway supports the conclusions from the International Conference on the Safety of Transport of Radioactive Material held in Vienna in July. Increased international co-operation regarding coordinated accident emergency planning is essential to enable rapid containment and ensure public safety in the event of accidents. Furthermore, Norway supports the call for establishing a liability regime aimed at providing a better system for the covering of potential costs of remediation.

As a country committed to sustainable development and the protection of the environment, Norway welcomes the attention given by the IAEA to these issues. We are looking forward

to the IAEA International Conference on the Protection of the Environment from the Effects of Ionizing Radiation to be held in Stockholm in October this year.

In conclusion, Mr. President, let me confirm Norway's support for a substantial increase in the regular budget of the IAEA. We must ensure that the Agency continues to fulfil its indispensable role as regards non-proliferation, technical cooperation and in promoting the safe secure handling of nuclear material. Strengthening the IAEA's budget should ensure that its core programmes can be continued and make it less dependent on extra budgetary funding.

I would also like to confirm Norway's continued support to the Agency's Technical Co-operation Fund (TCF). We urge all countries to pay their assessed contribution in full and on time.

Norway will continue to lend its full support to the Agency.