



**STATEMENT BY
H.E. VICTOR G. GARCIA III
HEAD OF THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION TO
THE 47TH REGULAR SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL
CONFERENCE
Austria Centre, 17 September 2003**

MR. PRESIDENT,
DISTINGUISHED DELEGATES,
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN,

ON BEHALF OF THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION, I SHOULD LIKE, FIRST OF ALL, TO WARMLY CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR ELECTION AS PRESIDENT OF THIS 47TH SESSION OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE IAEA. UNDER YOUR LEADERSHIP AND ABLE GUIDANCE, WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT THIS CONFERENCE WILL YIELD CONSTRUCTIVE RESULTS. IN THIS REGARD, THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION PLEDGES ITS FULL SUPPORT TO YOU IN THE DISCHARGE OF YOUR DIFFICULT MANDATE. MAY I ALSO EXTEND OUR CONGRATULATIONS TO THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE GENERAL COMMITTEE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE PHILIPPINE DELEGATION WISHES TO COMMEND DIRECTOR-GENERAL MOHAMED ELBARADEI FOR HIS USUAL COMPREHENSIVE STATEMENT DELIVERED AT THE OPENING OF THE CONFERENCE. HIS STATEMENT AND THE ADDRESS OF THE UN SECRETARY-GENERAL DELIVERED BY MR. NOBUYASU ABE, NEWLY-APPOINTED UNDER-SECRETARY-GENERAL FOR DISARMAMENT AFFAIRS HAVE SET THE TONE FOR OUR PROCEEDINGS.

IN THIS REGARD, WE ALSO WOULD LIKE TO EXPRESS OUR APPRECIATION TO THE DG AND THE SECRETARIAT FOR THE EXCELLENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THIS CONFERENCE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

WE ARE GATHERED HERE ONCE AGAIN TO TAKE STOCK OF THE PROGRESS ACHIEVED BY THE IAEA IN RELATION TO ITS NOBLE OBJECTIVES AS SET OUT IN THE STATUTE. THE PHILIPPINES WAS ONE OF THE FIRST COUNTRIES TO BECOME A MEMBER OF THE AGENCY. THROUGHOUT ALL THESE YEARS, THE PHILIPPINES HAS BEEN AN ACTIVE SUPPORTER OF THE AGENCY. WE APPRECIATE THE VARIOUS TECHNICAL COOPERATION PROGRAMS THAT HAVE BEEN EXTENDED BY THE AGENCY IN VARIOUS FIELDS RELATED TO OUR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. THE IAEA'S IMPORTANCE IN PROMOTING INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY HAS BEEN AMPLY RECOGNIZED THROUGHOUT THE WORLD. TODAY, THE AGENCY CONTINUES TO PLAY A VERY CRUCIAL ROLE IN NON-PROLIFERATION AND NUCLEAR DISARMAMENT. ARTICLE III OF THE NPT IS VERY EXPLICIT IN THIS REGARD. THE PHILIPPINES IS FULLY COMMITTED TO THE NPT REGIME, WHICH IS A KEY ELEMENT IN THE MAINTENANCE OF INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND STABILITY.

MR. PRESIDENT,

THE PHILIPPINES WELCOMES THE SIX-PARTY TALKS HELD IN BEIJING RECENTLY TO DISCUSS THE DPRK NUCLEAR PROGRAM. WE BELIEVE THAT THIS ISSUE CAN BE RESOLVED THROUGH PEACEFUL MEANS AND CONSTRUCTIVE DIALOGUE AMONG THE PARTIES CONCERNED. IN OUR CONSIDERED VIEW, THE EVENTUAL AIM OF THE TALKS SHOULD BE THE DENUCLEARIZATION OF THE KOREAN PENINSULA. THE DPRK NUCLEAR ISSUE IS A MATTER OF SERIOUS CONCERN TO THE PHILIPPINES AND TO THE COUNTRIES IN THE REGION. WE THEREFORE JOIN OTHER MEMBERS

OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN CALLING UPON THE DPRK TO ABANDON ITS NUCLEAR WEAPONS PROGRAM IN A VERIFIABLE MANNER AND RETURN TO THE NON-PROLIFERATION REGIME. IN THIS CONTEXT, THE PHILIPPINES SUPPORTS THE DETERMINED EFFORTS OF THE DIRECTOR-GENERAL TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE.

MR. PRESIDENT,

LAST WEEK, THE IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS ADOPTED WITHOUT A VOTE AND BY CONSENSUS A RESOLUTION ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NPT SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT IN IRAN. IN THIS CONNECTION, THE PHILIPPINES SUPPORTED THE STATEMENT DELIVERED BY THE DISTINGUISHED AMBASSADOR OF MALAYSIA ON BEHALF OF THE NAM COUNTRIES IN VIENNA. WE ARE HOPEFUL THAT IRAN WILL COOPERATE FULLY WITH THE AGENCY TO RESOLVE ALL OF ITS OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS. AS A STATE PARTY TO THE NPT, WE ADHERE TO THE INALIENABLE RIGHT OF ALL STATES PARTIES TO IT TO DEVELOP, RESEARCH, PRODUCTION AND USE OF NUCLEAR ENERGY FOR PEACEFUL PURPOSES WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION AND IN CONFORMITY WITH ITS PROVISIONS. IN THE SAME BREATH, WE ALSO CALL UPON IRAN TO PROMPTLY SIGN, CONCLUDE AND IMPLEMENT THE ADDITIONAL PROTOCOL TO ALLAY THE CONCERN OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY ABOUT ITS NUCLEAR PROGRAM. AS STATED BY THE PHILIPPINE SECRETARY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, BLAS F. OPLE, "THE PHILIPPINES ALSO STRONGLY HOPES THAT A CONTINUING DIALOGUE WILL HELP TO PROPERLY ADDRESS ALLEGATIONS THAT IRAN HAS VIOLATED ITS NPT OBLIGATIONS."

MR. PRESIDENT,

AT THIS JUNCTURE, I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION SOME SIGNIFICANT PROGRAMS IN THE PHILIPPINES IN THE PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY. THE OVERALL POLICY THRUST OF THE PHILIPPINES, UNDER PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL ARROYO IS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A STRONG DEMOCRACY DRIVEN BY HUMAN DEVELOPMENT GOALS.

PRIORITY PROGRAMS, INCLUDING PARTNERSHIPS WITH THE IAEA, ARE THEREFORE ANCHORED ON SUCH AN OBJECTIVE. THE PROJECTS ON TECHNICAL COOPERATION, WHICH WE ARE UNDERTAKING WITH THE AGENCY, REFLECT THE SAME NATIONAL INITIATIVE.

IN AGRICULTURE, WE HAVE A DEVELOPMENT-RELATED PROJECT ON **ENHANCING AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTIVITY THROUGH RADIATION TECHNOLOGY IN MINDANAO**. THIS IS AN UNDERTAKING ENVISIONED TO SPAN FOUR YEARS, WITH THE AIM OF DEVELOPING NEW MUTANT VARIETIES OF RICE AND HIGH-VALUE FRUIT CROPS THROUGH THE EMPLOYMENT OF RADIATION-INDUCED MUTATIONS AND MOLECULAR TECHNIQUES.

THE ISLAND OF MINDANAO, ONE OF THE THREE MAJOR ISLAND GROUPS OF THE COUNTRY, IS BEING LAUNCHED AS THE NATION'S FOOD BASKET, THEREFORE REQUIRING THE INTERVENTION OF R&D, INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT, AND THE APPLICATION OF POST-HARVEST TECHNOLOGIES TO ENSURE ITS CONTINUING PRODUCTIVITY. RADIATION-INDUCED MUTATION BREEDING ACTIVITIES HAVE BEEN INITIATED FOR RICE, OUR STAPLE FOOD AND FRUIT CROPS, CASHEW AND MANGOSTEEN.

MR. PRESIDENT,

IN THE AREA OF HUMAN HEALTH, WE HAVE AN ONGOING PROJECT IN **NEONATAL SCREENING FOR CONGENITAL HYPOTHYROIDISM** WHICH IS AN EXTENSION OF A PROJECT STARTED IN 2001 IN COOPERATION WITH THE AGENCY. NEONATAL SCREENING AIMS TO IMPROVE INFANT MORTALITY IN THE FIRST FEW WEEKS AFTER BIRTH BY EARLY DETECTION OF HYPOTHYROIDISM. THIS PROGRAM HAS ENJOYED GRANTS FROM THE PHILIPPINE COUNCIL FOR RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND THE CANADIAN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY, APART FROM SUBSTANTIAL SUPPORT FROM THE AGENCY. THROUGH TECHNICAL COOPERATION FUNDING FROM THE AGENCY, FOR THE PAST THREE

YEARS, THE PHILIPPINES HAS ENHANCED THE CAPABILITY OF OUR CENTRAL LABORATORY TO UNDERTAKE THE PROJECT.

THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LEGAL INFRASTRUCTURE BY WAY OF A CONGRESSIONAL BILL MANDATING THE SAID PROCEDURE, AS WELL AS ENSURING THAT MOTHERS ARE WELL-INFORMED IS ACTIVELY BEING PURSUED BY THE PHILIPPINE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF HEALTH, ALSO IN SUPPORT OF THE PROJECT GOALS. TO DATE, A BILL, THE NEWBORN SCREENING ACT OF THE PHILIPPINES, HAS ALREADY PASSED THE SENATE, AND HAS JUST BEEN HEARD IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES. IT FORESEES TO SAVE AN ESTIMATED 10,000 NEWBORNS ANNUALLY FROM POSSIBLE MENTAL RETARDATION AND DEATH. THIS IS A PROJECT THAT TRULY IMPACTS THE NEXT GENERATION AND IS WORTHY OF SUPPORT.

MR. PRESIDENT,

PRIORITIZING THE ENVIRONMENT IS ALSO A VITAL UNDERTAKING FOR THE COUNTRY. THE PHILIPPINES CURRENTLY HAS A PROJECT ON **NUCLEAR ANALYTICAL TECHNIQUES FOR AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT**. THROUGH THE GENERATION OF DATA ON AIR POLLUTION SOURCES, POLLUTANT COMPOSITION, AND MODELS ON POLLUTANT TRANSPORT, IT IS ENVISIONED THAT NATIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL REGULATORY AUTHORITIES WOULD BE ABLE TO BENEFIT, PARTICULARLY IN TERMS OF ACQUIRING SCIENTIFIC BASIS FOR FORMULATING AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLANS AND POLICIES. IN THIS REGARD, DATA GENERATED BY THE PROJECT HAVE FILLED GAPS IN OUR NATIONAL AIR QUALITY STATUS REPORT. ADDITIONALLY, THE PHILIPPINE NUCLEAR RESEARCH INSTITUTE (PNRI) HAS MADE ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE CO-LOCATION OF GENT SAMPLERS AT TWO NEW SAMPLING STATIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT BUREAU OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES, WITH REAL-TIME MONITORS THAT ARE BEING SET UP UNDER THE NATIONAL CLEAN AIR ACT.

AS INDICATED IN OUR TECHNICAL COOPERATION REPORT FOR 2002, THE PHILIPPINES CONTINUES TO ENGAGE WITH THE AGENCY IN HELPING FIND A SOLUTION TO HARMFUL ALGAL BLOOMS, OR "RED TIDE", THROUGH THE CONTINUING PROJECT 'NUCLEAR TECHNIQUES TO STUDY THE RED TIDE PROBLEM'.

MR. PRESIDENT,

ON SECURITY OF RADIOACTIVE SOURCES, THE PHILIPPINES ACTIVELY PARTICIPATED IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON SECURITY OF RADIOACTIVE SOURCES IN MARCH THIS YEAR. WE WELCOME ITS RESULTS, WHICH ENCOURAGE ALL STATES AND THE SECRETARIAT TO ENHANCE NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS AND STATES TO STRENGTHEN THEIR MECHANISMS FOR PROVISION OF ASSISTANCE. THE PHILIPPINES TAKES INTO ACCOUNT THE RESULTS OF THE DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE IN ITS OWN ACTION PLANS. THE RECENTLY REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT ON THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF RADIOACTIVE SOURCES CERTAINLY MEETS THE NEED FOR ENHANCED SECURITY MEASURES IN THE COUNTRY, AND WE SUPPORT IT WHOLEHEARTEDLY. IN THIS REGARD, WE ARE SECURING DISUSED RADIOACTIVE SOURCES FROM THREE TELE-THERAPY UNITS FROM TWO PHILIPPINE HOSPITALS, WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE AGENCY. AS A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS OF THE IAEA, THE PHILIPPINES ACTIVELY SUPPORTED THE REVISED CODE OF CONDUCT.

ANOTHER PROJECT STARTED THIS YEAR IS ON **SITE SELECTION AND CONCEPTUAL DESIGN OF A NEAR-SURFACE DISPOSAL FACILITY**. A DETAILED SITE INVESTIGATION, CHARACTERIZATION AND EVALUATION AS TO VARIOUS VULNERABILITIES AND HAZARDS FOR NUCLEAR WASTE DISPOSAL WILL BE CONDUCTED, WITH THE END IN VIEW OF ESTABLISHING A DISPOSAL CONCEPT AND REPOSITORY DESIGN, INCLUDING THE COMPLETION OF A REPOSITORY SAFETY ASSESSMENT.

MR. PRESIDENT,

LAST JULY, THE **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE SAFETY OF TRANSPORT OF RADIOACTIVE MATERIAL** WAS HELD. AS AN ARCHIPELAGIC STATE, THE PHILIPPINES VIEWS IT AS A VERY IMPORTANT CONFERENCE. WE THUS WELCOME THE OUTCOME OF THE CONFERENCE AND LOOK FORWARD TO FURTHER DIALOGUE ON THE VARIOUS ISSUES THAT REQUIRE COOPERATION AMONG MEMBER STATES.

MR. PRESIDENT,

IN THE BID TO CONSTANTLY UPGRADE AND STRENGTHEN THE SKILLS AND CAPABILITIES OF THE PHILIPPINE NUCLEAR MANPOWER POOL, **HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND NUCLEAR TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT** ALSO ENJOYS THE BENEFITS OF CONTINUING INTERACTION WITH THE AGENCY. IN THIS REGARD, WE THANK THE AGENCY FOR BEING AN ACTIVE PARTNER.

THERE IS A CARRY-OVER PROJECT FROM THE 2001-2002 CYCLE ON **GAS ISOTOPE GEOCHEMISTRY FOR GEOTHERMAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES**, SPEARHEADED BY THE ENERGY DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION OF THE PHILIPPINE NATIONAL OIL COMPANY. A MAJOR ACHIEVEMENT UNDER THIS PROJECT IS THE GENERATION OF A PRIMARY DATA ON THE ROLE OF NOBLE GASES IN WATER RESERVOIR PROCESSES. SINCE FEW STUDIES TACKLE THE EFFECTS OF FIELD EXPLOITATION ON NOBLE GASES COMPOSITION AND ISOTOPE RATIOS, THE FINDINGS WILL BE BENEFICIAL IN PLANNING FOR FUTURE RESERVOIR MANAGEMENT.

THE PARTICULAR FOCUS ON WATER RESOURCES IS BUTTRESSED BY OUR ACTIVITIES IN THE NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVELS FOR WHICH SIGNIFICANT AND VISIBLE IMPACT HAS BEEN ATTAINED. THROUGH ISOTOPE AND CHEMICAL TECHNIQUES, A BETTER UNDERSTANDING HAS

BEEN ACHIEVED OF THE AQUIFER SYSTEMS THAT WERE THE SUBJECT OF THE STUDY. THE DETERMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN AQUIFER SYSTEMS AND GROUNDWATER/SURFACE WATER HAS PROGRESSED, TOGETHER WITH THE ASSESSMENT OF AQUIFER VULNERABILITY TO CONTAMINATION.

IN MINDANAO, ONE OF THE MAJOR ISLANDS OF THE PHILIPPINES, THE END-USER RECOGNIZES THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY RESULTS TO THEIR OWN WATER MANAGEMENT EFFORTS, AND HAS AGREED TO CONTINUE THE STUDY WITHIN THEIR AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY, FOCUSING ON GROUNDWATER CONTAMINATION. WITH THE RECOGNITION OF ISOTOPE TECHNIQUES AS AN IMPORTANT TOOL, THE IMPROVEMENT OF WATER RESOURCES MANAGEMENT BY OTHER WATER DISTRICTS IS EXPECTED TO FOLLOW.

MR. PRESIDENT

WE FIRMLY BELIEVE THAT THE TC PROGRAMME SHOULD BE DRIVEN BY THE PRIORITIES DEFINED BY RECIPIENT MEMBER STATES, IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES LAID DOWN IN DOCUMENT INFCIRC/267. IN THIS REGARD, I HAVE PROVIDED A BRIEF OVERVIEW ON HOW THE AGENCY IMPACTS COMMUNITIES AND THE LIFE OF ORDINARY PEOPLE THROUGH CONTINUOUS PROACTIVE ENGAGEMENT WITH MY COUNTRY. IT IS A DEMONSTRATION THAT THE AGENCY CONTINUES TO DISCHARGE ITS MANDATE AS OUTLINED IN THE STATUTE.

IN CONCLUSION, MR. PRESIDENT, I WISH TO REAFFIRM MY GOVERNMENT'S FIRM COMMITMENT TO THE NOBLE OBJECTIVES FOR WHICH THE IAEA WAS CREATED.

THANK YOU, MR. PRESIDENT.