

Statement by Ambassador Chang Beom Cho
Resident Representative to the IAEA
Delegate of the Republic of Korea
at the 48th Regular Session
of the General Conference of the IAEA

Mr. President,

On behalf of the delegation of the Republic of Korea, I would like to extend my sincere congratulations to you, Mr. President, on your election as President of the 48th regular session of the IAEA General Conference. I am confident that under your outstanding leadership this Conference will produce a successful result.

I also would like to welcome the Republic of Chad, the Togolese Republic and the Islamic Republic of Mauritania as new Member States of the Agency.

Since its foundation in 1957, the IAEA has been carrying out its important mission and role as an international organization whose aim is to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. My delegation commends Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General, and his Secretariat for their dedicated service and outstanding performance achieved over the recent years.

(Nuclear Security and Safety)

Mr. President,

My delegation appreciates all the efforts that the IAEA has been making to prevent any possible malicious acts against nuclear installations or the misuse of nuclear and radioactive materials, and also to develop comprehensive and rigorous safety standards with the aim of enhancing nuclear safety and security around the world.

The Global Threat Reduction Initiative International Partners' Conference held in Vienna last week (from September 18 through 19) represents an important move to protect the international community from the nuclear threat, and we thank the Government of United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation for their initiative.

As part of its efforts to respond to the threat of nuclear terrorism, the Republic of Korea has strengthened measures to ensure physical protection of nuclear facilities and radioactive sources. As its first step, the Korean Government streamlined its legal system in accordance with the Agency's guideline INFCIRC/225/Rev.4 last year. In order to respond more effectively to emergencies at nuclear sites, we will set up Off-site Emergency Management Centers at all of our domestic nuclear power plant sites. We are also making utmost efforts to fully implement the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources. They include the development of a Radiation Safety Information System (RASIS) and a system for real-time tracking of radiation sources utilizing a satellite-based Global Positioning System (GPS).

In order to share our knowledge and experience in this area, we are holding a technical exhibition during this session on the theme of New Horizons for Nuclear Security and Emergency Preparedness in the corridor of this conference center.

As a Contracting Party to the Nuclear Safety Convention, we now look forward to the third round of the Review Meeting of the Convention on Nuclear Safety. The Republic of Korea, having already submitted its National Report to the Agency, believes that the upcoming Review Meeting will be another successful one.

(Nuclear Energy, Science & Application)

Mr. President,

Amid increasing demand for primary energy resources and growing concern over the greenhouse effect, nuclear power has been recognized again as a clean and CO₂-free energy source. As was suggested at the International Conference on Fifty Years of Nuclear Power - the Next Fifty Years, held in Obninsk, Russia, the future of nuclear power hinges upon the development of nuclear hydrogen technology, innovative reactors, proliferation-resistant fuel cycles and safe management technology for spent fuel and radioactive waste. In this regard, my delegation strongly believes that the Agency will play an even more important role over the next fifty years.

The Republic of Korea currently has a total of nineteen nuclear power plants in operation. The 1,000 MW electric Ulchin Unit 5 started its commercial operation last June. The first unit of the APR1400, an advanced pressurized water reactor of 1,400 MW electric, is soon to be built at Shin-Kori, and it will enter into commercial operation around 2011. It will boost Korea's competitiveness in the development of nuclear technology as the plant is confidently expected to operate safely as well as economically.

The Republic of Korea will continue to play a key role in developing an integrated modular small-sized reactor used for both desalination and power generation, called the SMART. Member States are showing an increasing interest in small- and medium-sized reactors. Therefore, we propose that the Agency encourage the exchange of information on multipurpose small-sized reactors amongst the Member States through the Technical Cooperation (TC) program.

The Republic of Korea, which has been actively involved in the IAEA's INPRO project, carried out a case study to assess the proliferation-resistance of Direct Use of spent PWR fuel in CANDU reactors (DUPIC). It is our hope that the Phase 1B plan may be fulfilled and the project be implemented successfully.

The Republic of Korea wholeheartedly welcomes the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) approved by the Agency in June this year and will cooperate and collaborate with the Agency on this program.

(Technical Cooperation)

Mr. President,

Recognizing the importance of the Agency's technical cooperation, the Republic of Korea has increased its contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF). This year we increased our contribution by 18% to \$1,000,000 in an effort to contribute to solving the difficulties that the Agency faces in providing technical assistance.

The Republic of Korea has also contributed U.S. \$500,000 every year to the Regional Cooperation Agreement Regional Office (RCARO) since it was founded in 2002. Under the RCARO, the Member States in the region are

expected to enhance their cooperation in the future. With the support of the Agency, this cooperation could also be fostered in broader geographic areas, through cooperative relationships with AFRA, ARASIA and ARCAL.

The Republic of Korea welcomes the launch of the Asia Network for Education in Nuclear Technology (ANENT) and looks forward to seeing ANENT implemented as one of the IAEA's regional TC projects. The Republic of Korea is also supporting and actively participating in the Asian Nuclear Safety Network (ANSN). We suggest that such networks be established in other regions and that all the regional networks be interconnected in a global network for generating and sharing information around the world.

(Amendment to Article VI)

Mr. President,

An amendment to Article VI of the Statute was approved by consensus at the 43rd session of the General Conference in October 1999 in resolution GC(43)/RES/19 to increase the number of members of the Board of Governors from the current 35 to 43. The amendment was the result of almost 20 years of laborious negotiations to balance the demands of democratic representation and efficiency by reflecting the development of nuclear technology and the increase in membership of the Agency since Article VI was last amended in 1973.

In view of this, it is regrettable that, five years after we adopted the amendment by consensus, only 35 of the 137 Member States have ratified it. The 47th session of the General Conference last year adopted decision GC(47)/DEC/14 to encourage Member States to take action in this regard. We would like to urge all Member States that have not yet done so to ratify the amendment to Article VI as

soon as possible.

(Safeguards and Nuclear Non-Proliferation)

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea has long been dedicated to maintaining and strengthening the nuclear non-proliferation regime and the IAEA safeguards system. Given the unprecedented challenges to the nuclear non-proliferation regime, the importance of a strong, effective and efficient IAEA safeguards system cannot be overemphasized. It is vital that all Member States adhere to the strengthened IAEA safeguards system backed by the Additional Protocol. Indicative of its own commitment, the Republic of Korea became the 39th country in the world to ratify the Additional Protocol on February 19, 2004.

The Republic of Korea is the only one among the countries active in nuclear power generation to have a firm policy of voluntarily renouncing enrichment and reprocessing facilities, despite our high demand for nuclear fuel. My Government also actively contributed to the cause of nuclear non-proliferation as Chairman of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), one of the key pillars of the nuclear non-proliferation regime, over the previous year. During our chairmanship, we were able to contribute to making the NSG a more effective yet broadly-based international export control regime by enlarging qualified membership and conducting extensive outreach dialogues.

For decades, we have set an example as a nation that makes positive use of the immense resources and possibilities presented by nuclear energy, while at the same time fully honoring our obligation to use nuclear energy solely for peaceful purposes.

In this context, it is very unfortunate that the incidents involving nuclear-related research experiments by some Korean scientists in the past have been recently brought to the attention of the international community in such a disproportionate manner. The experiments in question were conducted without the knowledge or authorization of my Government and were performed on a laboratory scale exclusively for research purposes and involving only a milligram quantity of nuclear material. As soon as these incidents came to the attention of my Government, we informed the IABA on our own initiative of all the relevant information that we acquired through the investigation. In line with our steadfast commitment to transparency and openness, the Republic of Korea has extended full, proactive and exemplary cooperation to the IAEA and will continue to do so to facilitate the thorough verification work by the Agency's inspectors. We have full confidence in their traditional professionalism and competence.

(Four Principles on the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy)

Mr. President,

In this regard, I would like to draw your attention to my Government's special statement on four principles on the peaceful use of nuclear energy, pronounced by the Standing Committee of the Korean National Security Council on September 18, 2004 in response to various misinterpretations and unwarranted suspicion surrounding the recent incidents. This statement underlines, among others, the following:

First, the Government of the Republic of Korea reaffirms that it does not have any intention to develop or possess nuclear weapons. We have not planned or pursued any nuclear programs intended for military purposes, and there will be

no change in this policy in the future. In addition, the Korean Government reaffirms that it strongly rejects all international activities related to the development of nuclear weapons.

Second, the Government of the Republic of Korea will firmly maintain its principle of nuclear transparency and will strengthen its cooperation with the international community to this end. We will faithfully implement the IAEA Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol and other international non-proliferation agreements to which we are a State party. The Korean Government highly appreciates all the activities of the IAEA to maintain nuclear transparency and expects that the IAEA verification activities on nuclear experiments in the Republic of Korea will be highly professional and impartial. We will fully cooperate throughout the process to ensure the complete confidence and understanding of the international community.

Third, the Government of the Republic of Korea will faithfully abide by international norms on nuclear non-proliferation, including the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), as well as the Joint Declaration of the Denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula of 1992. We will take all necessary domestic measures to strengthen our control over nuclear materials and will also actively participate in the international efforts to this end. My Government hopes that in due consideration of these efforts on our part the international community will extend full support and cooperation to us so that all pending issues concerning the Republic of Korea can be dealt with in an impartial manner based on the actual facts.

Fourth, with the confidence of the international community, the Government of the Republic of Korea will expand the peaceful use of nuclear energy. As a country with a high level of dependency on nuclear energy, the Republic of

Korea wishes to emphasize that the peaceful use of nuclear energy is a crucial element of our national policy objectives. With the recent incidents, we will seek the greater confidence of the international community and strive for a higher level of transparency, and against this backdrop will make efforts to ensure stability in the use of nuclear energy and expand the peaceful use of nuclear energy. The Korean Government will deal with this matter in a responsible manner to ensure that the confidence of the international community in its nuclear policy will be sustained.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea, as a founding member of the IAEA in 1957, has been a very active member in all major fields of the IAEA's activities: safeguards, technical cooperation and safety and security. As one of the leading States in nuclear energy, the Republic of Korea will spare no efforts in helping to achieve all the goals of the IAEA, which have paramount importance for the lives of all human beings. In so doing, we will continue to maintain close cooperation with the Secretariat and all Member States. I would like to emphasize that only by our coordinated and undivided efforts can we move towards a safe world free of nuclear threat.

Thank you, Mr. President.