

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

STATEMENT

**To the 52nd General Conference of the
International Atomic Energy Agency**

by

**H. E. Dr. Arman Kirakossian
Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs**

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Ladies & Gentlemen,

Let me, first of all join other delegations in congratulating you upon your election and express my strong confidence, that with your leadership the 52nd General Conference will mark a significant step forward in the achievements of the major goals of the Agency. I would also like to warmly welcome the new members of the Organization: the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Independent State of Papua New Guinea and the Sultanate of Oman.

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Armenia I would like to express my deep satisfaction with regard to the report of the Director General Dr. Mohammed El-Baradei, which gave us a comprehensive overview of the tremendous work done by the International Atomic Energy Agency during the last year. Taking into consideration today's nuclear renaissance, the role of the IAEA obviously became more important and the mandate needs to be strengthened. It is my pleasure to inform this distinguished audience, that Armenia was considered as one of the 47 countries succeeded in their reports to the IAEA under the Safeguards Agreement and the Additional Protocol. In April this year we presented our report to the 4th Review Meeting on the Nuclear Safety Convention, which was followed by discussions and valuable recommendations.

Mr. President,

I would like to bring to your attention some aspects of Armenia's collaboration with the IAEA. Every year my country accepts up to 30 missions verifying safety and security of the ANPP, as well as seismic safety and operational security. One

of the very important missions namely the International State System for Account and Control /ISSAC/ is planned to take place from 15-to 24 October, this year and the International Probabilistic Safety Analysis Review Team /IPSART/ will arrive in March-April next year. The recommendations of these two missions will be incorporated in the future measures aimed at safety upgrade of the Metsamor NPP.

Let me also stress the importance of our cooperation with Agency's Technical Cooperation division. Six national projects are under implementation in which 20 governmental and nongovernmental organizations are involved. Apart from national projects Armenia participated in 30 regional projects. I would like to express my gratitude to the Technical Cooperation division for sustainable assistance.

Mr. President,

Since the 51st General Conference Armenia performed some significant undertakings toward the safety improvement of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant. The dry storage for the nuclear waste management has been enlarged in collaboration with the French company "AREVA"; additional 12 Modules have been constructed, which will allow us to resolve the waste management problem for another 35-40 years. Recently a new Educational Center has been established in the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant which was constructed with the assistance of the Government of the United States and will serve as a training facility for the personnel of the NPP. Several measures targeted at safety improvement have been performed during 2007/2008 and some others are planned to be performed during outage this year. In almost a three-months period different 8 measures will be conducted in order to upgrade safety and security of the ANPP. For this purpose ANPP from its own budget allocated 1mln USD in 2007 and 600.000USD in the first half of 2008. In 2005 the plan of safety upgrading of the ANPP was revised and will be fully implemented until the end of 2009. It is planned to spend

additional 3mln USD by that time. The next stage of the safety upgrading plan has been elaborated for the years 2009-2016. The decision and action plan on decommissioning of the existing unit in 2016 have been adopted by the Government. In this regard Armenian Government already approved a preliminary timetable and budget. The ANPP will be obliged to allocate some funds for that purpose from its own budget.

Mr. President,

I would also like to present the developments in the legislative field in the Republic of Armenia. In 2005 the National Assembly adopted revised National Law on Peaceful use of Nuclear Energy. Meanwhile, there is common understanding that the new law needs to be amended. It becomes important especially now, when Armenia comes up with serious plans to construct a new unit, which is going to replace the operational one after its decommissioning. However, evidently the adoption of a new law will pass through a long process of discussions, public debates and expertise. Therefore, taking into consideration the present demands, the Government has decided to make urgent reforms in the existing law, while elaborating the new one. As far as the regulatory regime is concerned, it also needs certain revision in the view of the decommissioning of Unit 2 of Metsamor NPP and the construction of the new unit. As a preliminary study of the needs for construction of the new unit a survey has been made jointly with the Government of the United States entitled “ Complete Information on the Environment of the New Nuclear Block” and the “Study of Preliminary Planning”. The first discussions of these two documents took place in September, 2008, in Yerevan, Armenia.

Mr. President,

Evidently international cooperation is one of the major pillars of the Agency’s mandate, which is based on mutual assistance and solidarity among Member

States. Armenia is one of the beneficiaries of such cooperation. On September 11, this year, 3rd Donor's meeting was held in Yerevan. The first meeting took place in Vienna in December 2005 after the visit of the Director General Dr. El-Baradei. Since then once a year the meeting of donor countries dedicated to the safety upgrading of the Armenian NPP takes place. Donor countries made presentations about already implemented projects and future plans. Apart from the donor countries /United States, United Kingdom, Russian Federation, Check Republic/ several organizations joined the meeting – the European Commission, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. It was for the first time that EBRD took part in the meeting and informed about its intension to allocate 100.000 Euro for feasibility study and for decommissioning. UK reports, that is going to spend 2.8mln USD mainly for development of radioactive waste storage and in future will concentrate on a project related to the security issues.

The United States informed about two additional projects to be implemented in future. European Commission will concentrate mainly on decommissioning projects.

Russian Federation has recently offered 10mln USD for several projects, which will be prepared in collaboration with the ANPP. These projects will cover different aspects of ANPP safety upgrading – technical aspects, general examination, equipment and training of personnel.

The Government of Armenia has decided to join the Agreement between the Governments of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation on establishment of International Uranium Enrichment Center in Angarsk. In 2008 a Closed Joint Stock Armenian- Russian Company was established for the investigation of the site for possible uranium mining.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Delegates,

I would also like to underline once again Armenia's interest in INPRO projects, especially in those, which are related to the countries with small grid energy supply. In particular, we actively participate in Collaborative Project (CP) on "Implementation Issues for the Use of Nuclear Power in Small Countries". Armenia is also invited to participate in Global Nuclear Energy Partnership conference in Paris, and on October 1 the Minister of Energy and National Resources of Armenia signed the relevant Declaration.

Mr. President,

I would like to use this opportunity to express Armenia's gratitude to all donor countries, as well as to other partner countries for their continuous assistance and experience sharing.

Mr. President,

There is no doubt that nowadays the solidarity in combating terrorism is of major importance for international community in general, and for the nuclear community in particular. Armenia, like many other countries, has created Emergency Management Center. Back in July, 2008 this year we organized seminar and exercise "ATOM – 2008" with participation of all agencies concerned, regional authorities, regional rescue offices and ANPP personnel responsible for physical protection. Another exercise is planned to be held in December this year. In order to further develop physical protection of Armenian NPP the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan /INSSP/ has been elaborated with IAEA Nuclear Security division. The INSSP touches different aspects of physical protection: improvement of legal and regulatory framework, prevention, detection, response and human resource development.

Two days ago here, in the Austria Center within the framework of the INSSP a project for Physical Protection System upgrades at ANPP was signed between the

IAEA, the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant and “Energyrepairgarant” company from Armenia. The value of the contract is 1, 580 000 EUR provided by the Government of the United Kingdom to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund. It is the largest project of the Agency in the Physical Protection area so far.

We believe that implementation of such a comprehensive plan as INSSP will upgrade the safety of Armenian NPP significantly.

On July 14, 2008, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, H.E. Mr. Edward Nalbandian signed the Nuclear Smuggling Outreach Initiative document with the US State Secretary Mrs. Condoleezza Rice in Washington. This document is aimed at the elimination of nuclear smuggling through activities in 4 major fields: prevention, detection, response and fighting against corruption. Thus Armenia is the 7th country who joined this initiative. We would like to appeal to the Member States to join this important project which we consider as an important part of the Global Initiative on Combating Nuclear Terrorism /GICNT/ along with the Proliferation Support Initiative /PSI/.

Mr. President,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me to express the opinion, that these initiatives can be considered as indivisible parts of the non-proliferation regime and will facilitate the outcome of the upcoming NPT Review meeting in 2010. We hope to reach an agreement among Member States on the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty implementation and would like to encourage states to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty – another important international instrument targeted at the further strengthening of the non-proliferation regime.

I thank you Mr. President