

## 52nd IAEA General Conference: General Debate

### Australian Statement

Mr President

My delegation congratulates you on your election, confident that your leadership will give our deliberations every opportunity for success.

We warmly welcome the new Member States that have been admitted to the IAEA: the Kingdom of Lesotho, the Sultanate of Oman and the Independent State of Papua New Guinea. We are particularly delighted to welcome our Pacific neighbour into the IAEA. Australia has worked closely with the PNG authorities to upgrade the safety and security of radioactive sources, in collaboration with the US. We have also assisted PNG with a new radiotherapy unit at the Angau Hospital in Lae.

Mr President

The Australian Government, led by Prime Minister Kevin Rudd, is committed to a more active role in multilateral affairs and our support for multilateral institutions is a key pillar of our foreign policy. Reflecting this commitment, and our wish as a creative and energetic middle power to contribute to global peace and security, Australia will seek a United Nations **Security Council** seat in 2012 for 2013-2014.

Australia will work to advance and strengthen the nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament architecture. On 9 June in Kyoto, Prime Minister Rudd proposed an **International Commission on Nuclear**

**Non-proliferation and Disarmament.** Japan has joined Australia in establishing the Commission, which is being co-chaired by former Australian and Japanese Foreign Ministers Gareth Evans and Yorikio Kawaguchi. The Commission's two year mandate is to reinvigorate efforts on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament, in the context of the 2010 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, and beyond. Mr Rudd and Prime Minister Aso of Japan announced the composition of the Commission in New York on 25 September. As Mr Rudd noted, the Commissioners are eminent and outstanding individuals from around the world who are uniquely placed to bring fresh and imaginative vision to this important undertaking. Australia will host the Commission's first meeting in October.

Mr President

Finding ways to strengthen the **IAEA's safeguards system** will be a critical element in reinvigorating global non-proliferation efforts.

Australia supports the use of diplomacy to bring all states within the nuclear non-proliferation regime and under IAEA safeguards and inspections.

Implementation of safeguards is a core mission for the IAEA. It is important that Member States support the evolution of the safeguards system to address contemporary challenges. We need to ensure IAEA inspectors have the necessary authority to carry out inspections, so that the Agency can provide the assurances which contribute to a climate of confidence conducive to progress on non-proliferation, disarmament and cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Australia has worked

actively with the IAEA to promote this goal, including through our longstanding Australian Safeguards Support Program and through our continued membership of the Director General's Safeguards Advisory group.

We strongly urge all states yet to ratify an Additional Protocol to do so promptly. The Additional Protocol is an integral part of the contemporary verification standard. Ratifying an AP should be seen positively as a way of enhancing the confidence of all states in the peaceful nature of a state's nuclear activities: not negatively, as a burdensome new commitment, a bargaining chip or a concession which is conditional on another state's action.

Australia also firmly supports recognition of the Agency's existing authorities to inspect for indicators of weaponisation.

Another important element in strengthening the non-proliferation regime is ensuring a robust **international response to violations** of safeguards commitments. In some cases, there may be a need for the provision of information and access beyond that required by a safeguards agreement and an Additional Protocol.

In the Board meeting last week, we expressed our regret that **Iran** continues to expand its enrichment-related activities in defiance of legally binding UN Security Council requirements, even as evidence of military dimensions to its nuclear program grows. Iran continues to block the IAEA's investigation into evidence of military dimensions to its nuclear activities and to deny the Agency the means to verify that its present nuclear activities are exclusively peaceful in nature. We again call on

Iran to implement the AP and the modified Code 3.1 without delay, and to undertake any further transparency measures that may be necessary in light of Iran's long-standing history of undeclared activities, and to suspend enrichment-related activities, as required by the Security Council. In this regard, we welcome the recent adoption of UN Security Council resolution 1835.

In short, Mr President, we urge Iran to make the same kind of strategic decision that Libya did in late 2003, when it disclosed its undeclared activities and began pursuing a policy of full transparency, promptly implementing the Additional Protocol and providing the Agency with the access it deemed necessary to verify the cessation of military nuclear programs.

Australia sees a vital role for the IAEA in the **DPRK's** denuclearisation and return to compliance with the NPT and its obligations under its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. We have welcomed the progress that has been made thus far in the Six-Party talks. But we are disappointed that the DPRK has yet to agree to a mechanism for verifying denuclearisation, as it agreed it would at the Six Party talks on 10 to 12 July. And we are very concerned by the DPRK's suspension of disablement at Yongbyon, and its steps towards restoring the facilities, including its decision to deny IAEA inspectors access to the reprocessing plant and its stated intention to introduce nuclear material to the plant. We call on the DPRK to reverse these decisions and work with its Six Party talks partners to implement its commitments. It is appropriate that this conference make a similar call.

My delegation is also concerned by credible information that points to North Korean assistance to **Syria** in building an undeclared nuclear reactor. Syria is obliged under its safeguards agreement to report the planning and construction of any nuclear facilities. We urge Syria to cooperate fully with the Secretariat in its investigation of this information.

It is necessary that we, as Member States, hold each other to account for safeguards violations. Failure to be vigilant in this regard would erode the credibility of the safeguards system and the global security architecture it supports. For similar reasons we consider it inappropriate that States under investigation by the Agency serve on the Board.

Mr President

The Australian Government attaches great importance to **nuclear safety** and security, and continues to work closely with the IAEA and our regional neighbours on these issues. As a major uranium supplier, we strongly support the work of the IAEA in fostering best-practice safety standards in uranium mining. On Tuesday this week, Australia – in association with the Agency – hosted a roundtable meeting on the safety implications of the revival in the uranium mining industry. We encourage interested Member States to take part in the technical meeting on implementation of sustainable best-practices in uranium mining in mid-October.

Reflecting our commitment to research reactor safety, Australia hosted the IAEA's successful "International Conference on Research Reactors: Safe Management and Effective Utilization" in Sydney in November

2007. We look forward to participating in the international meeting on application of the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors in Vienna in late October.

Australia is a strong supporter of the continuing development of IAEA safety standards and supports the directions set out in the recent roadmap for the future of the Safety Standards.

On emergency preparedness, Australia supports the need for effective Agency facilitation of emergency response arrangements, and is pleased to be able to register four Response Assistance Network (RANET) teams with the IAEA's Incident and Emergency Centre.

We attach importance to the safe, reliable and timely transport of radioactive materials which have an essential role in medical, scientific and industrial applications. Therefore, we have played an active role in the establishment of the International Steering Committee on Denial of Shipment of Radioactive Materials. We welcome the regional workshops on denial of shipment in Italy, Tanzania, Madagascar and China in recent months.

Australia strongly supports the Agency's **nuclear security** activities, including through contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund. We urge Member States that have not yet done so to commit to voluntary implementation of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and its supporting Guidance. We ratified the amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and are working constructively with the Agency on the range of security documents, including the review of INFCIRC 225 – the Nuclear

Security Guidelines. We were pleased to Chair the May 2008 open-ended meeting of legal and technical experts on sharing lessons learned in implementing the Guidance, and commend the meeting's conclusions to interested Member States.

Mr President

Australia enjoys the benefits of the **peaceful uses** of nuclear science and technology and is proud of its record in supporting other Member States' rights to share those benefits. While not a direct beneficiary of the Agency's **technical cooperation** program, last year we were the 12<sup>th</sup> largest contributor to that Fund. In addition, we contribute significant extra-budgetary funding to the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology for Asia and the Pacific. **RCA** projects contributed to regional socio-economic development in areas of food, agriculture, health care, industry and environmental protection.

Australia's contribution is not just financial, but intellectual and in-kind as well. Australia is, for example, a leader in nuclear medicine. As one illustration of this, the Australian Professor Robert Burton, a renowned specialist in cancer control planning, has been an advisor to the Agency's **PACT** program, and spoke at this year's Scientific Forum.

**Australia's nuclear facility operator, ANSTO**, has been designated an IAEA collaborating centre for Neutron Scattering applications, in recognition of its strong scientific capability and strong regional interaction. I am glad to report that ANSTO's OPAL research reactor returned to full operating power in May following a shut-down last year.

OPAL is again producing neutron beams for cutting-edge research into the structure and function of a variety of materials and irradiating materials for industrial, healthcare and scientific uses. When regulatory approval is obtained, OPAL will provide irradiated targets for a new enlarged molybdenum-99 facility for production of life-saving radiopharmaceuticals.

Mr President

The IAEA has a very important mission today and into the future. It is charged with developing systems to safeguard against nuclear proliferation, helping Member States to guard against acts of nuclear or radiological terrorism, helping to ensure that nuclear activities are carried out without danger to human communities or the environment, and that the manifold benefits of nuclear science and technology are made available in an appropriate manner – with each Member State fulfilling its responsibilities as well as exercising its rights.

The Australian Government will consider carefully the many thoughtful recommendations in the **Commission of Eminent Persons'** report on the Future of the Agency. Australia will work toward seeking adequate international resourcing of the IAEA to ensure its effectiveness in undertaking its Charter.

In closing, my delegation urges all Member States to work together in a cooperative spirit this week – and beyond – to ensure the success of the IAEA in coming years.

Thank you, Mr President.