

Statement by H.E. Mr. Enkhsaikhan Jargalsaikhan,
Head of the Mongolian delegation at the 52-nd
General Conference of IAEA

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Mr. President,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset allow me to congratulate you Mr. President on your well-deserved election to steer the work of this Conference. My delegation also extends its warm welcome to Oman, Lesotho and Papua New Guinea as the newest members of the growing family of IAEA.

Like other members of the Agency, Mongolia fully supports its multifaceted activities aimed at promoting its basic objectives.

Mongolia's policies

In January of this year the Great People's Hural (Parliament) of Mongolia adopted MDG based National Development Strategy, which sets the goal of accelerated economic development that should enable it to join the ranks of middle income countries by 2021. One of the important prerequisites for such rapid development is securing and increasing the supply of energy, a tall order when energy needs and the price of oil are both rising. That is why the strategy envisages establishment of an integrated energy system and increase and diversification of the energy mix, including more efficient use of coal through liquefying it, making greater use of solar and wind energies, building, where possible, hydroelectric power stations, and utilizing nuclear energy through exploiting the country's uranium resources and possibly building nuclear power plants.

With regard to the nuclear program, as an initial step, the Government would work to create an appropriate legal environment and develop a program of rational exploitation of its uranium deposits. The draft state policy on the exploitation of radioactive minerals and nuclear energy, and its subsequent implementation plan, drawn up by the Government, have been presented to the Parliament for its careful consideration and adoption. Work is also underway to draft a comprehensive national nuclear legislation and to

accede to a number of essential international legal instruments aimed at promoting nuclear safety, security and civil liability, including the Joint Convention and the Convention on Nuclear Safety.

My country attaches growing importance to its relations with the IAEA that was established 35 years ago. Thus in the past year alone the Prime Minister of Mongolia twice met with the Director General of the Agency to promote further these relations.

In view of the importance that the Government of Mongolia attaches to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, the Nuclear Energy Commission's status has recently been elevated to report directly to the Prime Minister. Work is underway to restructure the related governmental agencies, research and academic institutions so as to make state policy and the Commission's activities more effective and efficient. Steps are also being taken to strengthen further the Nuclear Regulatory Authority so as to enable it to have the independence necessary for performing its important tasks.

Nuclear safety

Promoting nuclear energy demands constant advances in innovative technologies. The development of new and safer power plant designs would make the nuclear option more attractive and viable. That is why my country is following with interest the multinational efforts in this regard and supports the efforts of the Agency to promote design of smaller, low-cost reactors that are more affordable for small and medium developing countries

Although safety is mainly a national responsibility, its effect and implications go way beyond national boundaries. Safety culture is a priority for all member states and for the international community as a whole. International cooperation is crucial. That is why we believe that services of INSAG and SCART are invaluable.

Safety and security are based first and foremost on international conventions and strict standards, peer-reviews, OSART, INSARR and IRRS missions, etc. They should not be limited to nuclear reactors and associated structures. Of no less importance is ensuring radiation protection, safety and security in the application of non-power nuclear technologies.

Given the number of nuclear facilities adjacent to its territory, Mongolia supports the Agency's policy to continuously improve safety and security standards and closely follows the activities under the INPRO and ITER projects as well as that of the Generation IV International Forum (GIF).

Technical cooperation

Mongolia greatly benefits from the Agency's assistance and sharing valuable experience through its technical cooperation programs, that yield positive results in peaceful nuclear applications, including in the areas of human health, agriculture, industry, the environment, etc. Thus, for example, since 1996 Mongolia has been successfully participating in the pilot program on improving the infrastructure for radiation safety, as a result of which tangible progress has been registered in this important area. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Department of Technical Cooperation for all its valuable support to Mongolia.

Five national projects are currently being implemented in Mongolia as part of 2007-2008 cycle, and talks are underway to agree on technical cooperation projects for 2009-2011.

We share the view that IAEA's three pillars, i.e. technology transfer, safety and security, and verification are of equal importance and that there should be a reasonable balance in the distribution of the Agency's resources. In that light we support the increase in the funding of technical cooperation projects that would help enhance the capacity of member states to use nuclear energy for peaceful and developmental purposes. Therefore it agrees that financing of technical cooperation activities should be sufficient, assured and predictable.

Non-proliferation

Mongolia strongly believes that establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones (NWFZs) contributes to confidence-building and strengthens the nuclear non-proliferation regime. We express the hope that the Director-General would be able to convene soon the forum on sharing experience of other regions with existing NWFZs and on its relevance for the volatile region of the Middle-East.

The right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy is guaranteed by the NPT to all its states parties and should not be disputed. On the other hand, a fully transparent nuclear policy of its parties are essential for mutual trust, productive cooperation and broader security.

The progress registered at the Six Party Talks on DPRK's nuclear weapon program should not be reversed; we believe that further progress can be achieved only through cooperation and diplomacy. IAEA's objective and essential role should not be diminished.

This year marks 10th anniversary of the adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of resolution entitled "Mongolia's international security and nuclear-weapon-free status", which recognized the country's unique status and called upon all states, including the five nuclear-weapon states (the P-5) to cooperate with it in strengthening that status. As a follow up to the resolution, Mongolia adopted national legislation that defined the status at the national level and criminalized acts that lead to violation of that status. At the international level, the P-5 have made a joint statement providing security assurances in connection with that status.

To formalize its nuclear-weapon-free status, last year Mongolia has presented a draft trilateral treaty to its immediate neighbors that could form the international legal basis for Mongolia's single-States NWFZ status. With our neighbors' cooperation we hope to see institutionalization of the status in the near future.

Thank you for your attention.