

**The Statement of the Syrian Arab Republic to the 52<sup>nd</sup> Session  
of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency  
29 September - 04 October 2008**

**Mr. President,**

It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you on your election as president of the 52<sup>nd</sup> Session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. The delegation of my country wishes you all the success in your endeavor and assures you of our support for you to lead this conference to realize its desired objectives.

The delegation of my country welcomes the brotherly Sultanate of Oman, the Kingdom of Lesotho and the Republic of Papua New Guinea for joining the Agency. We take this opportunity to praise the prompt and continuous efforts of the Director General of the Agency Dr. "Mohamed ElBaradei" and the Secretariat in the wisdom and objective management of the Agency's works and in the excellent preparation for the current session of the General Conference.

I am pleased to inform you that the Government of my country endorsed the amendment of Paragraph A of Article XIV of the Statute. We shall submit the instrument of acceptance of the amendment within the coming weeks.

**Mr. President,**

We regrettably listened to the statements of some states requesting more transparency and cooperation with the Agency from our side. I would like here to recall that the Director General and the Deputy Director General for Safeguards have indicated in the September meeting of the Board of Governors that Syria was cooperative and complied with the procedures agreed upon with the Agency.

We confirm that the government of my country is and will continue to be totally cooperative and transparent with the Agency. However, this cooperation will under no circumstances be on the account of exposing our military positions and of threatening our national security.

**Mr. President,**

Syria has submitted an application of nomination for the MESA seat in the Board of Governors for the term 2008-2010. We call upon the Member States to sponsor our nomination and would like here to remind the distinguished delegates of the positive role Syria always played through its presentation in the Board of Directors and also of the fruitful cooperation with the Agency in the technical fields.

**Mr. President,**

The forthcoming stage of the Agency's progress features a pioneering role in the promotion of nuclear energy in the Member States especially that the experience proved that nuclear technology is very essential within the package of other options for energy generation. We emphasize that the three pillars that the Agency rests on according to its Statute: Safety and Security, Science and Technology, and Safeguards and Verification constitute the strong foundations on which the Agency should continue working. We also highly appreciate and

support the efforts of the Agency's Secretariat under the proper direction of Dr. ElBaradei in setting up the future plans for the Agency.

Appreciating the "Report of the Commission of Eminent Persons on the future of the Agency" and the contributions it added, we call on the Conference to view it as a non-binding guidance report, thus maintaining the strategy of the Agency and our prospective view of its role in the coming years entrusted to the Member States through the two Policy-Making Organs of the Agency in accordance with the provisions of its Statute.

**Mr. President,**

The Agency established many partnerships with a number of UN Organizations for the purposes of increasing the efficiency of projects of common interest; integrating the efforts that are being exerted in every respective field; and optimizing and rationalizing expenditures. Those partnerships proved to be successful in achieving the planned goals. As far as this is concerned, we call upon the Agency and all Member States to spare no effort to ensure that the work of the FAO/IAEA Division would continue. This would be the least support we give to a programme that has accomplished thorough successes in many of the Member States.

**Mr. President,**

It was so disappointing that the General Conference in its 51<sup>st</sup> Session failed to discuss the agenda item "The Israeli Nuclear Capabilities and Threat" and to issue an international resolution in this connection, thus sending a negative message to the Peoples of the Middle East Region based on the double standards methodology that the International Community is using with regard to the inherent danger in the existence of such non-peaceful nuclear capabilities. Despite the so many resolutions issued throughout the past decades concerning the Israeli nuclear armament capabilities outside the nuclear weapons non-proliferation system, the Israeli military nuclear arsenal is still growing, with the technical and financial support by some of the large countries that at the same time exercise an international restriction on the peaceful uses of the atomic energy in other countries.

What the Arab Group and the friendly countries are requesting is to provoke the international will to confront the danger inherent in the continued existence of non-peaceful Israeli nuclear capabilities in the Middle East region that threaten not only the regional peace and security but also the international peace and security.

The item before us is fully sustained by all the Arab and friendly countries that look forward to granting their peoples a nuclear weapons free world; we are now required to prove to our security and stability loving peoples that the whole World backs up the tendencies towards peace and treats the causes of security instability in the region

The continued existence of Israeli military nuclear capabilities without immediate treatment is no doubt a major cause for undermining the peace endeavors and would shake the confidence in the credibility of the International Community towards disarmament and non-proliferation system.

**Mr. President,**

The creation of Nuclear Weapon Free Zone in the Middle East continues to attain high priority on the agenda of all international forums. While all the Arab Countries are already parties to the Nuclear Weapons Non-proliferation Treaty, Israel exceptionally continues to be

the sole country in the region to possess an advanced nuclear arsenal that is not challenged by any serious steps by the International Community to end the state of instability in security balance in the Middle East region.

The international efforts collaborated to establish Nuclear Weapons Free Zones in Africa, Asia, Mid Europe, Latin America and the Caribbean, but regrettably the Middle East Region remains far from any serious international initiative to free it from nuclear weapons with the aim of achieving international security and peace, and this which might presage an arms race.

The Syrian Arab Republic sees that the arrangements and preparations for the creation of the Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East, which the resolutions of the United Nations have always called for, require firstly that Israel must accede to the Nuclear Weapons Non-Proliferation Treaty and place all its nuclear facilities under the Comprehensive Safeguards of the International Atomic Energy Agency; and secondly that Israel must comply with Security Council resolution 487 of the year 1981, which explicitly demanded Israel to urgently place its nuclear facilities under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

**Mr. President,**

The delegation of my country believes that no benefit can be expected from holding a forum on the lessons learned from the experiences of the existing regional Nuclear Weapons Free Zones unless Israel had taken the initiative to take serious steps to accede to the Nuclear Weapons Non-proliferation Treaty, and then to subject all its nuclear installations to the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguards System and remove all the obstacles it is placing on the road to the establishment of a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East. Until all these have been realized, the participation of Syria in this forum will be decided after making sure of the objectivity of its agenda and of the clearance of its goals.

**Mr. President,**

The government of my country pays great attention to the issues related to nuclear safety and security. On the level of nuclear safety, about one year ago we received the INSARR mission (Integrated Safety Assessment of Research Reactors to Miniature Neutron Research Reactor MNSR), which introduced its recommendations to promote the safety level in the reactor. We meant to observe those recommendations in order to enhance the safety of that reactor. We also hosted a regional training course on the "Physical Protection of Radioactive Resources" in cooperation with the Agency last year. Furthermore, we are working to integrate the safety standards in the national regulatory measures in this field.

**Mr. President,**

The Technical Cooperation Report 2007 reflected the good level of implementation of regional and national projects for the current TC Cycle which will end this year. We cannot but thank the Technical Cooperation Department and its entire staff for attaining the high implementation rate in the first year of the cycle. We also commend the positive initiatives that were launched during the current year on the level of Asia Group of the Agency. The two regional meetings of the National Liaison Officers that were held this year, and the recommendations concluded by the participants helped start a constructive dialogue to lay the foundations for cooperation among the countries of this wide region which have varying levels of advancement in nuclear technology. We look forward to implementing those

recommendations, especially the generation of a database for the host institutions for trainees that will be contained in the Asia Website for Technical Cooperation at the Agency.

Moreover, the consideration of the projects of the next TC cycle during the Bangkok meeting will have significant impact towards meeting the priorities of the countries of the region in the regional projects, and will also help finalize the workplan to satisfy the objectives of these projects.

By the end of this year the activities of most of the current year's TC national projects in Syria will be concluded, and thus these projects will have satisfied their objectives; and we look forward to starting the next cycle, which will be relatively longer than usual.

**Mr. President,**

The Atomic Energy Commission of Syria effectively supported the 2007 technical cooperation activities. The "MSc. Post Graduate Educational Course on Radiation Protection and Safety of Radiation Sources", is still going on with close and strong cooperation among the Agency, the University of Damascus and the Atomic Energy Commission. We also continued to receive and train candidates from countries in the region in the fields of agriculture, hydrology, radiation protection and regulatory matters.

Within the same context, we believe that, the role of the Agency in enhancing "the regional training centres" and establishing partnerships among the training institutions in the World strengthens the training component which is essential in the implementation of technical cooperation projects, and hastens the acceptance and placement process.

**Mr. President,**

In the framework of the deal to increase the funding of technical cooperation resources the Agency adopted the principle of National Participation Costs, on the payment of which the implementation of the TC cycle is conditional. It is true that the participation rate was reduced from 8% to 5%, but the mechanism of advance payment and of adding the collection from regional projects, which was previously free, has reversely affected the results of this deal. The delegation of my country is in favour of the idea of reviewing this mechanism concerning the advance payment due to the negative impact embodied in the delayed implementation of the projects components for a period of up to 4 months in the outset of the first year of the cycle. In addition, by this mechanism we could pay for activities that, for one reason or another, might not find their way to implementation. We, therefore, propose that a team be formed in order to study this mechanism and that the Agency submit its report on this issue to the very next meeting of the Board of Governors.

**Mr. President,**

The group of the "Co-operative Agreement for Arab States in Asia for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology" has made good progress during the current TC cycle, where the implementation rate in 2007 for the group's seven projects was around 80%. We thank the Technical Cooperation Department, and special thanks go to Mr. Peter Salema, Director of Asia and the Pacific Section, for his interest in our regional projects. On the level of technical cooperation projects, some of the ARASIA States Party signed a memorandum of understanding for the purpose of facilitating the exchange of

plant genetic resources in the framework of the project “Mutation Induction and Supportive Breeding and Biotechnologies for Improving Crop Productivity”.

As Chairman of the ARASIA Board of Representatives, I am pleased to state that the Group adopted the “Medium Term Strategy 2008-2013” in its annual meeting that was held in Amman in May 2008. The Group also adopted the “Guidelines and Operating Rules for The ARASIA Programme”. With these being already in place, the Agreement had got its foundations that will be followed for the benefit of the States Party.

During the current cycle of the Conference the Group adopted an electronic website for the Agreement that contains details on the technical cooperation projects and Agreement-related information. The website was launched via the electronic website of the Atomic Energy Commission of Syria.

**Mr. President,**

Finally, the delegation of my country wishes you and our Conference all the success and wishes the Agency more progress for the service and benefit of humanity.

Thank you