

**STATEMENT BY HEAD OF SINGAPORE DELEGATION
AMBASSADOR TAN YORK CHOR
AT THE 53rd GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE IAEA
SEPTEMBER 2009**

President,

Let me, on behalf of the Singapore delegation, first extend our heartiest congratulations to you, Ambassador Jennifer MacMillan, on your election as President of this 53rd Regular Session of the General Conference. Our delegation would like to pledge its full cooperation and support to you for a successful General Conference.

President,
Mr Director General,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,

2 Singapore warmly welcomes to the IAEA the return of the Kingdom of Cambodia as well as the Republic of Rwanda as a new member, at a time when the role of the IAEA, after more than 50 years of advancing the cause of “Atoms for Peace”, has become even more salient in today’s world. The Nobel Prize, awarded to the Agency and to Director-General Dr Mohamed El-Baradei in 2005, is testimony to the stellar work done by the Agency in meeting the challenges and aspirations of the world in the nuclear arena. Singapore joins others in applauding the work of Dr El-Baradei, and as he completes his mission this year, we would like to acknowledge that much of the stature of the IAEA is due to his dedicated, visionary and wise leadership in steering the work of the Agency.

3 Looking to the future, Singapore extends its warmest congratulations to Ambassador Yukiya Amano who will soon be the IAEA's first Asian Director-General. We are confident, with his vast experience in the fields of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation, that he will also lead the IAEA with distinction. Importantly, for the first time in this century, there is renewed impetus in working towards a world free of nuclear weapons, raising our hope to see progress in the global nuclear disarmament agenda. The success, in particular, of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2010 can impart a greater shared sense of purpose in our deliberations on the **Future of the Agency**. Indeed, collective efforts and resources of all member States will be needed to empower and enable the Agency to face the challenges and seize the opportunities that lie ahead.

4 For Singapore, we view the **IAEA's 3 Pillars of Work**, namely, Safety and Security; Safeguards and Verification; and Science and Technology, as being complementary and of equal importance. As nuclear energy rises as an option for many countries, and we see an increase in nuclear installations around the world, **nuclear safety and security** is crucial to avoid any catastrophic fallout. We endorse the IAEA's work, in support of States' efforts, to ensure the highest standards in nuclear safety and security, through setting relevant benchmarks and through the various IAEA adopted instruments, peer reviews, assistance and review missions. Singapore is of the view that as the world enters a "nuclear renaissance" age, a corresponding culture of nuclear safety must emerge. Regional and national efforts need to be re-doubled to bolster confidence within our societies for the use of nuclear power to be accepted. In this connection, we note the adoption by the European Union on 25 June 2009 of a Nuclear Safety Directive as a major step towards a common legal framework and a strong safety culture in Europe.

5 In our own region of Southeast Asia, several countries have either indicated an interest in or are pursuing nuclear energy programmes, in view of increasing energy needs. In this regard, Singapore fully supports greater regional cooperation to complement and strengthen international and national efforts in the area of nuclear safety and security. In March 2009, the Energy Studies Institute of Singapore had also organised a one-day Regional Roundtable on “Achieving a Safe and Sustainable Nuclear Future”, which brought together ASEAN officials, both policy-makers and regulators, and international nuclear experts, to engage in a free-ranging dialogue on the pursuit of civilian nuclear energy and the attendant policy implications including managing public concerns about nuclear safety. Beyond our own efforts among the 10 members of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Singapore fully supports the Asian Nuclear Safety Network in its effort to ensure a high standard of nuclear safety in the Asian region. Singapore joined the Network in December 2008, participated in its Second Meeting of Nuclear Safety Strategy Dialogue in April 2009, and is pleased to host in Singapore next month its 10th Steering Committee Meeting.

President,

6 The right of States to use nuclear materials for peaceful purposes must also be exercised in compliance with States' non-proliferation obligations. Singapore firmly believes that we must ensure that the IAEA safeguards and verification regime remains capable of responding credibly and effectively to new challenges within the Agency's mandate, in order to continue to providing safeguards assurances. At the national level too, every State has to play its part. I am pleased to share that Singapore has over the last few years enhanced its legislative framework to ensure compliance with the Additional Protocol and the Modified Small Quantities Protocol, which we ratified and concluded with the IAEA respectively in March 2008. Just three weeks ago, we hosted an IAEA Safeguards Inspectors' visit in accordance with the mechanism outlined by Article 8 of the Additional Protocol.

7 Since many years, the IAEA has had before it several verification cases. Singapore would like to thank and commend the IAEA team for their persistence, often labouring in difficult situations, in pursuing investigations into these cases. Singapore deeply regrets the path that the DPRK has taken and urges the DPRK and all other relevant stakeholders to return to meaningful dialogue soon. Singapore hopes to see meaningful dialogue, too, between Iran and the United States of America in particular. We also look forward to an early clarification of the remaining issues of concern to the IAEA in the hope that the Agency would then be in a position to exclude the possibility of military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme, and to bring this matter to a final closure and proper conclusion.

President,

8 The Agency's quiet work in the promotion of peaceful applications of nuclear **science and technology** is the area that no doubt has the greatest impact on the lives of many people in developing countries, contributing concretely towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals. Yet, the international news media has most grossly under-reported on this aspect of Agency work. The benefits of nuclear applications extend to human health in medical diagnoses and treatment, pest control, various industrial applications such as in the petro-chemical and mining sectors, animal and agro-industries, food processing, and so on.

9 While Singapore is pleased that the Agency's technical cooperation programme has expanded considerably in recent years, both in its scope and in the number of its activities, there is still room for the Agency to further enhance its work to help developing countries in these areas. We commend the Agency for establishing partnerships with international and regional development organisations to derive greater synergies. Singapore remains firmly committed to supporting the IAEA's technical cooperation programme. We look forward to further cooperation with the IAEA through our Memorandum of Understanding with the IAEA in outreach efforts to assist other developing countries.

12 Singapore is keenly aware that a comprehensive and effective technical cooperation programme requires adequate, steady and sustainable funding. We are thus ready to continue to pledge our full share of the Technical Cooperation Fund for the year 2010. We also reiterate our continued support to regional activities undertaken under the Regional Cooperative Agreement for the East Asia and Pacific region. This year, in support of the Agency's technical cooperation programme, Singapore has hosted various scientific visits, fellowship attachment and regional training events under the Technical Cooperation and Regional Cooperative Agreement frameworks.

In conclusion,
President

13 The IAEA remains the only global platform where a whole range of nuclear issues are discussed, while the Agency can only be strong and effective if we, member States, afford it the necessary support and resources to carry out its mandate. Though some issues may seem to divide us, we must strive to work constructively and guard against increased politicisation that could generate mistrust and distract us from our common objectives and endeavours to support and strengthen the IAEA.

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