

**Statement by H.E. Mrs. Nongnuth Phetcharatana
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Thailand
to the International Atomic Energy Agency
Head of the Thai Delegation
At the 53rd Regular Session of the General Conference of the IAEA
Vienna International Center, Vienna
16 September 2009**

**Madam President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

It is a great honour for me to address the 53rd regular session of the General Conference of the IAEA. On behalf of the Royal Thai Government, allow me at the outset to congratulate you upon your election as President of the Conference. Under your able leadership and guidance, I am confident that this Conference will successfully accomplish the tasks before it. The Thai Delegation wishes to assure you of its full support and cooperation. My congratulations also go to other members of the General Committee.

Please also allow me to commend Mr. El Baradei, the Director-General, on having discharged his responsibilities in an impartial, effective and professional manner, and on his successful leadership of the Agency, particularly in the enhancement of transparency and confidence-building among IAEA Member States.

My delegation would also like to take this opportunity to reaffirm its full support to the work of the Agency under the leadership of Mr. Yukiya Amano, the new Director-General. We have full confidence that with his extensive skills and vast experience, the IAEA will continue to fulfill its mandate effectively. We look forward to working closely with him.

My delegation wishes to congratulate and welcome the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Republic of Rwanda as new members of the Agency. The increasing number of member states attests to the important role of the Agency in the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Madam President,

As a founding member of the IAEA, Thailand has followed with keen interest the evolution of the Agency. Moving beyond the confines of its

own work as an intergovernmental body created to serve as the world's "atoms for peace" organization, the Agency has gone through challenging and turbulent times to become the global focal point for all aspects of nuclear issues that it is today.

The fast growing interest in nuclear energy, as seen in the increase of new entrant countries in the introduction of nuclear power programmes and the expansion of the existing nuclear power programmes, is seen as both an opportunity and a challenge for the Agency. With peaceful uses of nuclear energy come challenges posed by risks of nuclear accidents and terrorism. To address such challenges effectively, the Agency would certainly need strong support from and partnership with all Member States.

Since the early days of the establishment of the IAEA, Thailand has forged cooperation with the Agency and has undertaken measures under the IAEA framework to complement its multifaceted work in promoting nuclear safeguards and verification, safety and security, and cooperation in science and technology. We hope to further strengthen our partnership with the Agency, especially in the promotion of energy for development.

Safeguards and verification: role of the IAEA in nuclear non-proliferation

Madam President,

The work of the Agency in promoting the peaceful use of nuclear technology is closely related to its task of implementing verification activities and international safeguards against misuse of nuclear development. Notwithstanding the scientific and non-political nature of the Agency's work, it is undeniable that the IAEA safeguards system is the only mechanism to verify non-diversion of nuclear activities to military purposes and assures compliance with non-proliferation obligations undertaken by States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT).

As the sole international verification body, the world relies on the Agency's technical expertise and its indispensable role in strengthening the global nuclear non-proliferation regime. Amidst growing international concerns over risks of proliferation, Thailand commends the IAEA's tireless efforts in implementing effective nuclear verification in several proliferation cases.

Thailand supports all the efforts aimed at strengthening the effectiveness and efficiency of the IAEA safeguards system, including comprehensive safeguards agreements and additional protocols, which serve as the international standard for nuclear verification. On our part, we are taking practical steps towards our ratification of the Additional Protocol.

In addition, Thailand hopes to see closer cooperation between the Agency and Member States based on goodwill and mutual respect. Relationship between IAEA inspectors and local experts in Member States, especially in developing countries, would contribute to building better rapport for the Agency's verification work.

Cooperation between the Agency and regional nuclear-weapon-free zones may also be explored to complement the IAEA safeguards system at the regional level. As an active Party of the Treaty on South East Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (SEANWFZ) and the current Chair of the SEANWFZ Commission, Thailand hopes to see future cooperation between SEANWFZ and the IAEA to build up a regional safeguards system as well as to foster regional cooperation in peaceful uses of nuclear technologies.

Nuclear Safety and Security

Madam President,

The IAEA is also well recognized for its work on nuclear safety and security to protect people and the environment from harmful radiation exposure. My delegation appreciates the Agency's continued efforts in enhancing the security of nuclear and radioactive sources and material, in particular in the development of the Nuclear Security Plan for 2010-2013.

Thailand wishes to reiterate her support to the Agency's role in assisting Member States to establish and maintain effective nuclear security through capacity building, guidelines, human resource development, sustainability and risk reduction, as well as through assistance in their adherence to and implementation of nuclear security related international legal instruments.

My delegation reaffirms Thailand's commitment to put in place the safety and security system in response to emergencies, thereby strengthening the system of notification, licensing, border control, inspection and enforcement of radiation safety and radioactive sources security.

At the regional level, Thailand recognizes the productive role of the Asian Nuclear Safety Network (ANSN) which, through the establishment of a knowledge database, serves to share existing and new technical knowledge and practical experience related to nuclear safety to further improve the safety of nuclear installations in the region.

Moreover, during the 27th ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting held on 29 July 2009 in Mandalay, Myanmar, ASEAN countries agreed to

further develop the ASEAN Nuclear Energy Cooperation Sub-sector Network to serve as a regional nuclear safety network in response to the growing interest in nuclear energy in Southeast Asia.

Science & Technology: nuclear applications

Madam President,

Thailand recognizes the IAEA's active role in promoting peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology, which contribute to sustainable development in the fields of energy, environment, health and agriculture.

Through the Technical Cooperation Programme, Thailand enjoys close cooperation with the Agency in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, which contributes to its efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. Many useful projects have been accomplished with the assistance and cooperation of the Agency.

In the field of health, Thailand wishes to highlight the success of the "Development of Radiopharmaceuticals for Clinical Use", which enables the diagnosis of neuroendocrine tumor. With our great interest in the cancerology, we aspire to be a potential centre of excellence in the Southeast Asia region for the Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) in, inter alia, developing multidisciplinary cancer capacity-building projects with emphasis on the training of trainers to enhance sustainability in developing countries that are Member States.

In agriculture, we appreciate the cooperation between Thailand and the IAEA in the improvement of the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) as the major component of a sustainable, environment-friendly and cost-effective integrated insect pest control. In this regard, Thailand is willing to offer its expertise as the centre of SIT technology transfer in Southeast Asia to facilitate the exports of fruit commodities to high-value markets.

In the development of industry, we note the achievement of the project "Raising Productivity in the Coal, Minerals and Petrochemical Industry by Using Nucleonic Analysis Systems and Radiotracers".

Thailand's Policy on Nuclear Energy

Madam President,

Meeting the world's energy needs, as well as addressing global warming and other environmental concerns, has become one of the key challenges facing us today. Similar to many other countries, Thailand needs to strive for diversification of energy types and supply sources, and one of the choices is nuclear energy.

Together with our ASEAN colleagues, Thailand is exploring ways to forge regional nuclear cooperation on a voluntary and non-binding basis, to study and explore the issues related to civilian use of nuclear energy as well as nuclear energy safety, capacity building, education and training, information sharing, and public understanding. Also, as a party to the SEANWFZ Treaty, Thailand, is obliged to conduct a nuclear safety assessment, prior to embarking on a peaceful nuclear energy programme, to conform to guidelines and standards recommended by the IAEA for the protection of health and the minimization of danger to life and property.

My delegation therefore seeks the IAEA's technical support and guidance on national infrastructure requirements as well as on the organizational, legal, economic and financial aspects of nuclear power programmes and on the promotion of a public information programme, all of which are essential for building a safe, reliable, efficient and widely acceptable nuclear-power programme.

Thailand hopes to see continued policy dialogues and strengthened cooperation with the Agency to further enhance the development and security of nuclear energy in the region. To reach our common goals, the guiding principles of our cooperative framework may also include, among others, the strategies to encourage private sector participation and strengthen the public-private sector joint initiatives in the development and implementation of nuclear development programs and activities in the future.

Regional nuclear issues

Madam President,

Turning now to regional nuclear issues, Thailand supports international efforts to find a peaceful solution to the Iran and DPRK nuclear issues.

Thailand takes note of the latest report of the Director-General on *Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Islamic Republic of Iran* and we urge Iran to cooperate fully with the IAEA in this regard. We respect every NPT party's inalienable right to peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

With regard to the DPRK, Thailand joins other ASEAN countries in urging the DPRK to fully comply with its obligations and the relevant UNSC resolutions. We hope to see all concerned parties return to the Six-Party Talks process as soon as possible and fully implement their commitments made in previous rounds of the Six-Party Talks, which remain the main mechanism for achieving peace and stability in the Korean Peninsula.

Closing remarks

Madam President,

Amidst the various challenges on nuclear issues faced by the international community, the IAEA and its Director-General have played an outstanding role in fulfilling the Agency's mission in strengthening safeguards and verification, as well as ensuring a high standard of nuclear safety and security around the world. Thailand continues to support the three pillars of the IAEA's comprehensive work which contribute not only to international peace and security but also to global social, economic and environmental development.

I thank you, Madam President.
