

STATEMENT OF THE HEAD OF UGANDAN DELEGATION, HON. ENG. SIMON D'UJANGA GIW, MINISTER OF STATE FOR ENERGY, TO THE 53RD REGULAR SESSION OF THE IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE, SEPTEMBER 14-18, 2009, VIENNA INTERNATIONAL CENTER

Mrs Jennifer Macmillan, President of the 53rd General Conference,

Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, the outgoing Director General of the IAEA,

Ambassador Yukiya Amano, the in-coming Director General of the IAEA,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates:

Allow me, Madam President, to add my voice in congratulating you on assumption of your role as the President of the 53rd General Conference. Please, be assured of the support of my delegation.

Let me take this opportunity to express sincere gratitude, on behalf of the Government of Uganda, to Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, the outgoing Director General of the IAEA for his dedicated, tireless, self-sacrificing and impartial leadership over the past 12 years. His competent leadership coupled by competency of all the staff of the Secretariat has led to significant contributions of nuclear science and technology towards socio-economic

development as well as strengthening nuclear safeguard measures. We shall miss you dearly, Dr. ElBaradei.

Allow me also, Madam President, to congratulate Ambassador Yukiya Amano of Japan upon his election as the new Director General of the IAEA. We pledge our strongest support during your term of leadership.

I would like also to take this opportunity to welcome the Kingdom of Cambodia and Republic of Rwanda as new members of the Agency. It is particularly pleasing to the East African Community that the Republic of Rwanda has joined the membership of the Agency. This will make it easier now to include the nuclear science and technology issues into the EAC common goals.

Madam President, allow me now to make the following commendations on the activities of the Agency over the past years as well as my countries expectations for the future:

Nuclear Sciences and Applications

The Government and the people of the Republic of Uganda is grateful to the Agency for continuous support in the peaceful applications of nuclear science and technology in the health, water, agriculture and industrial sector.

Madam President,

With regards to human health, my country is particularly grateful for the Agency's assistance in the introduction and continuous support of radiotherapy and nuclear medicine services. With the increasing cases of cancer, especially cervical cancer, radiotherapy technique has proved to be crucial component of cancer management programme.

My country further commends the Agency for introducing the Programme of Action on Cancer Therapy (PACT), and particularly thanks the Agency for accepting our request for imPACT by sending a pre-imPACT mission at the beginning of this month. We look forward to working together with the PACT team to develop a comprehensive National Cancer Control Programme.

Madam President,

Like in many developing countries, access to clean drinking water is a serious problem in Uganda. My country commends the Agency for continuous support in using isotope hydrology technique in assessing underground water resources in order to develop and implement comprehensive strategies and plans for rural and small towns' water supplies. We look forward to continuous cooperation with the Agency in this area.

Madam President,

I would like to thank the Joint IAEA/FAO Division of Food and Agriculture for the excellent jobs they have done in the past and continuing to do in carrying out research to develop disease and drought resistant varieties of crops as well as improvement of animal production.

As I speak now, erratic rainfall and drought pattern has pushed many people in my country as well in neighboring countries to biting hunger. Many have lost their lives due to starvation.

It is my appeal to the Agency to strengthen the activities of the Joint FAO/IAEA Division in order to rapidly develop improved crop varieties that can cope with growing population and climate change.

Nuclear Power

Madam President,

Access to modern energy services, particularly electricity, still remains a major challenge for my country and other developing countries, especially in Sub-Sahara Africa.

Although there are enormous potentials for power generation from renewable energy sources like hydro, solar, geothermal, biomass, wind as well as from fossil fuels, energy demand and supply studies show that in the long run, these resources will not be able to meet energy demand. This calls for diversification of our energy mix to include nuclear.

Besides, the growing concern on global warming and climate change makes it incumbent upon every nation to choose an energy supply path that leads to mitigation of climate change.

For the above reasons, my country took a courageous step to start building capacity for nuclear power, by enacting the Atomic Energy Act 2008 that provides for the developing peaceful nuclear power programme within the boundaries of the Agency's Safeguard and Safety regimes.

In this regards, we would like to thank the Agency for the support being rendered to countries interested in launching nuclear power programme through both the Technical Cooperation Department and the Nuclear Power Department.

The Agency's Milestone Approach and INPRO methodology are very helpful tools for nuclear new comer countries like mine, of which we are so grateful.

My country is particularly grateful to the Agency for supporting the development and deployment of safe, secure, economically viable and proliferation resistant Small Medium-sized Reactors (SMRs). These reactors will be ideal for developing countries.

Madam President,

Allow me also to take this opportunity to congratulate the Government and the people of the Kingdom of Sweden for reversing their decision regarding nuclear power.

I would also like to appreciate the role of the Global Nuclear Partnership whose objective is to enable safe and secure expansion of peaceful nuclear power programme while minimizing proliferation risks.

Nuclear Safeguard

Madam President,

Uganda strongly believes that safeguard and verification remains the key instrument to enhance peaceful use of nuclear power technology.

In this regards, my country highly appreciates the courageous steps taken by Presidents of the United States of America and the Russian Federation for reaching a milestone agreement to reduce their nuclear arsenals.

However, much more need to be done in this area in order to build trust and confidence in all the nuclear states and newcomers. In this regard, we wish to reiterate that the safeguard measures should continue to be applied comprehensively and impartially.

Nuclear Security and Safety

Madam President,

With growing peaceful applications of radioactive materials world over, there are increased challenges on ensuring security and safety.

The main concern for developing countries is the issue of illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological materials. In most cases, the cause of illicit

trafficking is the get-rich-quick scheme. Due to lack of awareness, most people in the developing countries believe that every radioactive material is uranium, which unfortunately, they believe can fetch a lot of money in the black market.

Madam President,

Illicit trafficking of these materials are putting the lives of many people at risks, both the traffickers and the public, because in some cases these substances are trafficked using public transport means and stored in bed rooms.

In this regards, we would like to express our gratitude to work being done by the Agency's Department of Nuclear Security as well as the Global Threat Reduction Initiatives of the U.S. National Nuclear Security Administration.

Conclusion

Madam President,

In conclusion we wish to re-emphasize that the contribution of atomic energy to health and prosperity throughout the world cannot go unnoticed. The Agency has continued to steer this in a very satisfactory manner, especially under the Technical Cooperation Programme.

Uganda will continue to support the Agency and we believe that with joint efforts of Member States and the Secretariat, the Agency will be able to

fulfill its mission and make greater contributions towards achieving prosperity for all humanity.

Thank you for your attention.