



STATEMENT

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Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. On behalf of the International Atomic Energy Agency let me express my appreciation to you and to the Commission for giving me the floor. Our request is a simple one – to hew to the spirit and the substance of sustainable development as defined in the Brundtland Report, and to judge nuclear power on the merits of its case – nothing more, and nothing less.

The essence of sustainable development is expanding assets and keeping options open. Yet we have heard proposals to exclude nuclear power from sustainable development strategies. The challenge for CSD-9 and related fora is not to tell countries what they can and can't use, but to set limits on things that matter – as was done with carbon emissions in the case of Kyoto – and let countries fulfill those obligations cleverly, innovatively, and in ways tailored to their own situations. Within these parameters, what energy mix they choose is ultimately their own decision.

Nuclear power broadens the resource base by putting uranium to productive use; it reduces harmful emissions; it expands electricity supplies and it increases the world's stock of technological and human capital. It is ahead of other energy technologies in internalizing all externalities, from safety to waste disposal to decommissioning – the costs of all of these are in most countries already included in the price we pay for nuclear electricity. The complete nuclear power chain, from resource extraction to waste disposal including reactor and facility construction, emits only 2-6 grams of carbon per kilowatt-hour, about the same as wind and solar power and two orders of magnitude below coal, oil, and even natural gas.

The first task of sustainable development is often defined as bringing energy, particularly electricity, to the third of the world's population without it. For the rural poor, the best promise may be that offered by off-grid renewables, and we applaud the efforts underway for realizing that promise as quickly and broadly as possible. For the urban poor and the needs of growing mega-cities the mix needs to include large centralized power generation to match large centralized power demand.

Sustainable development is about growing assets and opening options – not foreclosing them. Given the Agenda 21 principle of differentiated responsibilities, those countries who are able and willing have a particularly important role to play in keeping the nuclear option open, broadening the resource base, reducing harmful emissions, expanding electricity supplies and increasing the world's technological and human capital. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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