

Statement

**by H.E. KIM Hong Kyun
Special Representative (Vice Minister)
for Korean Peninsula Peace and Security
Affairs**

**of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
of the Republic of Korea**

**at the 60th General Conference
of the International Atomic Energy Agency**

Vienna, 27 September 2016

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Government of the Republic of Korea, I would like to offer my congratulations to you on your election as the President of the 60th General Conference. I am confident that your outstanding leadership will make this Conference a great success. I would also like to welcome St. Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, and the Republic of Gambia as new members of the IAEA.

I am honored to lead my delegation to the General Conference on the 60th anniversary of the Agency. In Korea, one's sixtieth birthday is called *Hwan-Gab* and holds special meaning as a celebration of longevity and maturity. A span of sixty years signifies the completion of the first cycle in life and the beginning of the next

journey. As the IAEA opens a new chapter, I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Agency's unwavering commitment to *Atoms for Peace* and all it has achieved so far to make a difference in the world.

Looking ahead, the IAEA will have an even bigger role to play. As the international community is striving to achieve Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and a new framework for climate change, nuclear energy has become indispensable in our efforts to meet the challenges of our time. The vast potential for limitless applications of nuclear technology in health, environment, agriculture, and other areas is starting to be fully explored. As Director General Amano rightly put, nuclear energy is now not just *Atoms for Peace*, but *Atoms for Peace and Development*.

I believe the IAEA must continue to lead the way in our pursuit to maximize the benefits of peaceful nuclear

technology and prevent nuclear proliferation. I can assure you that the Republic of Korea will not hesitate to give the Agency all the support it can provide for this end.

Mr. President,

Earlier this year, the international community witnessed two outstanding safeguards issues of North Korea and Iran go in starkly different ways. As for the Iranian nuclear issue, the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is entering the stage of full-scale implementation. The Korean Government lauds the IAEA for its role in the implementation of the landmark agreement.

In contrast, North Korea conducted yet another nuclear test in just 8 months after its fourth test at the start of this year, disregarding repeated warnings from the

international community.

North Korea is the first and only country which has conducted nuclear tests in this century. In this respect, we welcome the joint statement adopted by the Friends of the CTBT Ministerial Meeting at the UN General Assembly last week in New York in which 43 participating countries condemned North Korea's repeated nuclear tests "in the strongest terms."

Moreover, it is the first and only country that has developed nuclear weapons programs within the NPT regime and announced its withdrawal from both the IAEA and the NPT. The North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho ridiculed the UN again before its 193 Member States when he spoke at the UN General Assembly and I quote, "there is no provision either in the UN Charter and or in any other international code which stipulates that the nuclear and ballistic rocket activity poses a

threat to the international peace and security," unquote.

Such bellicose and egregious rhetoric coupled with serial violations of all relevant UN Security Council resolutions have led my Foreign Minister to question whether North Korea is indeed qualified as a peace-loving member of the UN as a growing number of countries have already begun questioning.

As noted in the IAEA Director General's report this year, North Korea has refused all IAEA safeguards and inspections since 2009, while continuously pursuing the advancement of its nuclear capabilities. Furthermore, North Korea is continuing its nuclear development including the activities in relation to the Yongbyon 5 megawatt reactor and the reprocessing campaign, which are clear violations of UN Security Council resolutions and deeply regrettable.

The latest nuclear test demonstrated the highest yield ever among the five rounds conducted by North Korea over the past decade. The intervals of its nuclear tests have also been significantly reduced from 3 years to 8 months. All these demonstrate that North Korea is considerably advancing and accelerating its nuclear capabilities.

Even at a time of the worst flood in decades, Pyongyang has focused solely on its nuclear and missile programs, by pouring as much as 200 million dollars, an amount that exceeds the recovery costs, while completely turning a blind eye to the people's livelihood. Given such fanatical recklessness and obsession with nuclear development, North Korea's next nuclear test may even come sooner than we expect.

Furthermore, North Korea has also been pursuing the advancement of delivery vehicles for its nuclear

weapons, as evidenced by the firing of 22 ballistic missiles of all types this year alone. That's one ballistic missile almost every 10 days. These repeated nuclear and missile tests show that North Korea is now at the final stage of nuclear weaponization.

North Korea has not only advanced its nuclear technology but also publicly threatened to actually use these weapons, blackmailing us with preemptive nuclear strikes. In fact, North Korean Foreign Minister Ri Yong Ho announced at the UN last week and I quote "Going nuclear armed is the policy of our nation," unquote. He also made it clear that Pyongyang will I quote, "continue to take measures to strengthen its national nuclear armed forces in both quantity and quality," unquote. As such, North Korea is now posing an imminent threat to our very survival.

North Korea's pursuit of nuclear development is a

critical issue, since it not only undermines the foundation of the international nonproliferation regime but also threatens the peace and security of the Korean Peninsula, Northeast Asia, and beyond.

In the face of North Korea's behavior directly defying the IAEA's mission, the international community must send a firm message, with a completely different, renewed sense of urgency, to North Korea that it will never accept the North's possession of nuclear weapons, by adopting a stronger resolution on the implementation of NPT safeguards agreement between the IAEA and North Korea as well as a new and stronger UN Security Council resolution.

The path North Korea must take is clear: abandoning all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs in a complete, verifiable, and irreversible manner in accordance with relevant UN Security Council

resolutions, and thoroughly fulfilling its obligations under the NPT and IAEA safeguards agreements.

Mr. President,

The Republic of Korea has always been at the forefront of the global effort to uphold the three S's of Safeguards, Security, and Safety and to strengthen the international nonproliferation regimes. As we are faced every day with an existential threat from North Korea, the Republic of Korea holds onto the unshakable vision that "a world without nuclear weapons must start on the Korean Peninsula."

Korea has been an ardent supporter of the Agency's ambitious initiatives to upgrade its safeguards systems. Korea became one of the two Member States to apply the updated State Level Approach (SLA) in September last year, and introduced Unannounced Inspection (UI)

this May. I hope such cooperation will help the Agency better respond to the ever-evolving proliferation challenges and enhance the effectiveness of its verification activities.

Mr. President,

We cannot forget to mention nuclear security when we talk of nuclear energy. Following the conclusion of the Nuclear Security Summits earlier this year, the IAEA will have a central role to play in building an enduring nuclear security architecture. In doing so, the Ministerial Segment of the International Nuclear Security Conference will be a watershed in garnering international support to sustain the momentum generated over the past six years on strengthening nuclear security. As a demonstration of Korea's high level of commitment to nuclear security, my Foreign

Minister Yun Byung-se will serve as the President of this Conference. I would like to underline the importance of having high-level participation from all Member States.

In dealing with the changing global nuclear security landscape, Korea attaches great importance to strengthening international capacity for cyber security, and our efforts have been focused on this. Our input includes a contribution of 3 million US dollars to the Nuclear Security Fund and co-development of international training programs on cyber security.

Nuclear safety is another essential element in guaranteeing sustainable development and public receptiveness of nuclear energy. Korea appreciates that the Agency has played a central role in raising awareness, coming up with concrete measures, and promoting international cooperation on nuclear safety since the Fukushima Daiichi Accident.

The Republic of Korea is faithfully implementing the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) and the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety. This year, the Korean Government established a legislative and regulatory framework that stipulates legal responsibility for nuclear accident management.

We also recognize the entry into force of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC) as an important milestone toward a global nuclear liability regime, and we are currently holding internal discussions to review Korea's accession.

Mr. President,

In its commitment to nuclear safeguards, security, and safety, Korea has fostered nuclear energy for the past 60

years. Korea started with zero nuclear capacity but now has 24 reactors in operation that produce approximately 30% of the country's total power supply, with two more nuclear power plants approved for construction this year. What's more, Korea is now an exporter of nuclear technology to newcomers. The APR-1400 and the System-Integrated Modular Advanced Reactor (SMART) are just some of the successful cases of such international cooperation.

In addition, Korea is making an earnest effort to address post-operative issues by making sure that radioactive waste is being managed safely and efficiently. Following the decision to permanently shut down its Kori-1 nuclear power plant, Korea is making the necessary preparations for future plant decommissioning. As we build up our capacity for safe decommissioning, we hope for close cooperation with the IAEA and its Member States on this front.

Mr. President,

Before closing, I would like to remind us again of the historic task entrusted to us. The North Korean nuclear issue is unprecedented. And extraordinary threats require extraordinary measures. As my President recently warned at the East Asia Summit, unless we put a brake on Pyongyang's nuclear ambitions now, we will come to regret it tomorrow. This is our chance not to be missed to get North Korea back to the path of denuclearization through much tougher sanctions as well as heightened pressure on North Korea.

While we put our heads together to tackle the gravest proliferation threat to date, there are many other challenges that require our collective attention and wisdom. I believe that the IAEA will lead us in fulfilling its mission of *Atoms for Peace and Development*. At

this critical juncture, the Republic of Korea would like to stress the need for strong and effective leadership from the IAEA. Director General Amano's guidance and accomplishments for the past seven years have been exemplary in this regard, and we are pleased to support his third term in the Agency.

I hope the 60th anniversary of the IAEA will serve as a fresh reminder for us to reinvigorate our efforts to make the world a safer place to live. To help the IAEA in its undertaking, Korea will not hesitate to provide every support. I wish the 60th General Conference a great success, and extend my sincere appreciation to President Dato Adnan, Director General Amano, and the Secretariat. Thank you. /END/