



## **60th IAEA General Conference**

**Rosa Vásquez Orozco**  
**Chargé d'Affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Ecuador**  
**to the International Organizations in Vienna**

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Mister Chairman,

On behalf of the Republic of Ecuador, allow me to offer to you, Ambassador Adnan Bin Othman, our congratulations on your election as Chairman of the Sixtieth General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to reiterate the support and friendship of our delegation.

I would also like to thank the Director General, Ambassador Yukiya Amano, and - through him - the entire team of the Secretariat, for the preparation of the reports and the documents about the issues that bring us here together.

My delegation wishes to warmly welcome Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Saint Lucia and Gambia as new members of the Agency. We are very pleased to see that the number of countries of our region which have joined over the last years is growing.

Mister Chairman,

A little more than sixty years ago - with the Cold War in the background - the international community was able to commit to an effort to promote the peaceful use of nuclear energy, setting aside for a moment the priority of certain countries to use it for means of deterrence.

When the famous speech on "Atoms for Peace" was given, a mix of hope and skepticism surfaced. Today, celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the IAEA, we are delighted to verify that hope has been imposed and that science has proven that nuclear energy is, in fact, a mean to achieve greater levels of progress and welfare for the benefits of all humanity.

Ecuador is proud to have been a part of the establishment of the Agency and, at the same time, to testify to the important contributions of nuclear technology to the developments in relevant areas such as health, food, agriculture or industry. Therefore, the country hopes that the IAEA will become a key player in supporting the States for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, agreed on for the next 15 years.

Mister Chairman,

Ecuador wishes to enhance the essential role of the Technical Cooperation Programme and acknowledges the necessary actions and measures adopted by the Agency in order to count on a more efficient program which responds to the priorities of the Member States and which has been the result of an ongoing process of consultations. Maintaining this approach is essential to promote national efforts in the area of economic and social development as well as to achieve significant contributions to the fulfillment of the Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

In the case of my country, this direction has allowed us to complement an important investment made by the Government in 2015 in order to expand the physical infrastructure of national laboratories with the provision of modern equipment by the IAEA.

Mister Chairman,

Allow me to highlight the invaluable support that my country has received from the Agency, in the wake of the tragedy that resulted from the earthquake of 7.8 degrees on the Richter scale on the past 16<sup>th</sup> April, which claimed 660 lives, left 4.600 people injured, 34.000 people without at home, 120.000 children without schools and around 700 damaged buildings, including 16 hospitals.

The sensitivity demonstrated by the Director General and by the Division for Latin America and the Caribbean of the Department of Technical Cooperation enabled the IAEA to make an important contribution with the supply of portable x-ray equipment and its electricity generators, early-detection equipment for the Zika virus and personal radiation monitors.

Ecuador especially values the visit of the Director General, Yukiya Amano, to the country in the past June, and particularly appreciates his interest in inspecting closely the earthquake-affected area. This visit allowed us to define other possibilities of assistance, as in the case of non-destructive testing techniques which will begin in October.

Equally important have been the actions to mobilize resources to support this assistance program, which resulted in a very important contribution of the government of Japan, within the framework of the Initiative for the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy.

Furthermore, I would like to point out that - equally important as the institutional help - has been the solidarity of the Agency's staff, which resulted in financial donations for the victims from the Staff Association and in individual and voluntary contributions from the people working within the Department of Technical Cooperation.

Mister Chairman,

Ecuador, as a country that proclaims peace and universal disarmament and condemns the development and use of weapons of mass destruction, is preoccupied by the resurgence of policies based on nuclear weapons and policies of nuclear deterrence. Therefore, we want

to restate that the only effective guarantee against the use or the threat to use nuclear weapons is their total elimination and prohibition.

We uphold our firm position in favor of the full implementation of the three pillars of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), without discrimination and double standards, and we reiterate our concern because, while the goals of the Treaty regarding the non-proliferation and the exercise of the inalienable right to a peaceful use of nuclear energy have been implemented, the objectives of nuclear disarmament have not reported progress.

We, the Member States of CELAC, have reiterated our most profound concerns in respect of the humanitarian consequences of enormous proportions and the global effects of any accidental or intentional detonation; and we believe that this issue should be dealt with every time when nuclear questions are being discussed. We therefore congratulate the organization of the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo, Nayarit and Vienna on their contributions to the global discourse which seeks to procure a world free of nuclear weapons.

The region has the strong conviction and permanent commitment to continue to promote the complete and verifiable nuclear disarmament as the priority objective of our Community and the urgent necessity to achieve the total and general elimination of nuclear weapons.

For this reason, we are pleased that the will of the immense majority of the Member States of the United Nations has made possible the adoption of the *Final Report of the Open-Ended Working Group on Taking Forward Multilateral Nuclear Disarmament Negotiations* in Geneva on 19<sup>th</sup> August 2016 which recommends to convene a Conference in 2017, open to all States, with the participation of international organizations and civil society, in order to negotiate a new legally-binding instrument to prohibit nuclear weapons with a view to their total elimination.

The CELAC States, at the very highest level, are committed to starting this multilateral diplomatic process and to ensuring their greatest efforts to this goal. Said instrument is a necessary measure for nuclear disarmament and would meet the obligations of the States Parties in the NPT as indicated in article VI of the Treaty.

Mister Chairman,

My country has expressed its strong opposition to the recent nuclear test carried out by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea on 9<sup>th</sup> September 2016, ignoring completely the repeated requests of the international community. To that effect, Ecuador wishes to reiterate its call so that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea cooperates without delay with the Agency and allows us to resolve all pending issues, particularly the ones that have emerged during the absence of the Agency's inspectors in the country.

This deplorable fact leads us again to regret that twenty years after the CTBT's opening for signature, its entry into force has not yet been achieved. My country reiterates its

encouragement to the eight countries of Annex II of the Treaty to ratify it as soon as possible and without strings attached.

Mister Chairman,

The Government of Ecuador calls on all the States to adhere to the relevant multilateral instruments on this matter and to fully cooperate with the international organizations and its regulation and control mechanisms in order to add transparency to the development of advanced technology and to contribute not only to the peaceful use of nuclear energy but also to the peaceful use of outer space and to advance on the path to a world free of nuclear weapons.

By renewing our commitment to strengthen the regime of disarmament and non-proliferation, Ecuador continues to support the essential and independent work of the IAEA to ensure the use of nuclear energy in the safest way possible.

Finally, I avail myself of this opportunity to announce the support of the Government of Ecuador to Mr. Yukiya Amano in order to continue his work as Director General of the Agency.

Thank you very much.