

Statement by Byungseon Jeong

The 1st Vice Minister of Ministry of Science and ICT
Korea, Republic of
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Mr. President,
Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
It is good to see you all.

Even in this challenging time of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am confident that this General Conference will be a success under the excellent leadership of Mr. President and Director General.

The Korean government highly appreciates and firmly supports the IAEA's COVID-19 pandemic responses and its ZODIAC initiative.

This year Korea offered 300,000 US dollars to the Agency as special aid for the response to COVID-19, and additional contributions to the ZODIAC project are under review.

We will continue to spare no efforts in fulfilling our role as a responsible member of the international community.

Mr. President,

For the faithful implementation of the Vienna Declaration, the Republic of Korea has amended the relevant regulations since 2015 requiring all nuclear power plants to submit accident management plans, including severe ones.

Moreover, the Korean government is thoroughly preparing for the safe decommissioning of 'Kori Unit 1' by reflecting the safety requirements presented

by the IAEA.

Since it is our first decommissioning project, we will closely work with the IAEA Member States regarding decommissioning regulations and regulation technologies.

Mr. President,

As the Japanese government is indicated to give serious consideration to discharging the contaminated water from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant into the ocean, it raises concerns over its impact on environmental safety within the international community, including Korea.

Releasing contaminated water into the ocean is not an issue of Japan itself but one that could have a wide impact on the global marine environment as well as the neighboring countries.

It requires a thorough review of the adequacy of such a method and mid-to-long term environmental risks in collaboration with the international community, including the IAEA.

As it is also our common duty that we preserve the ocean, a shared resource, for all humanity.

Under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and the applicable international laws, the Japanese government has an overarching obligation to make a transparent communication with the global society including the Republic of Korea before making any disposal decision in order that the international community understand and accepts its safeness.

We would like to ask the IAEA to play a proactive role in this matter by thoroughly and continuously validating the implementation process and safeness of the plan and by sharing its results with the global society including the Republic of Korea in a transparent manner.

Mr. President,

The North Korean nuclear issue is still one of the major pending tasks in the global nuclear nonproliferation regime.

Even with a fluidity of the situation on the Korean peninsula due to COVID-19 and other factors, our government is exerting its utmost diplomatic efforts to maintain a stable circumstance while settling the complete denuclearization and the permanent peace on the Korean peninsula.

I expect the IAEA, its Member States and the international community to fully support our endeavors.

Mr. President,
Distinguished Delegates

All of us gathered here have always been committed to promoting peaceful uses and development of nuclear power.

However, sustainable development and prosperity of the humankind are challenged and threatened by the recent pandemics such as COVID-19.

The Republic of Korea expects that all Member States led by the IAEA make further efforts in preserving and maintaining a safe environment and lives to realize universal human values.

The Republic of Korea will lead the way in this direction.

Thank you.