
**Statement by His Excellency Architect Yeafesh Osman
Hon'ble Minister, Ministry of Science and Technology,
Government of the People's Republic of Bangladesh
at the 65th Session of the General Conference of IAEA
Vienna, 20-24 September 2021**

**Distinguished President of the General Conference,
Director General Ambassador Rafael Mariano Grossi,
Excellencies, Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,**

Good day.

Mr. President,

Good day.

To begin with, let me congratulate you, Mr. President, on your election as the President of the 65th General Conference of IAEA. I believe, under your unfailing leadership, the current General Conference will establish a sign of vibrancy of our warm relations with the Agency and this Session of the General Conference would attain all its objectives. We assure you and your colleagues of our all-out support and cooperation.

Allow me, Mr. President, to convey to you and all those present here the warmest greetings from the people and the Government of Bangladesh and on my behalf.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh expresses its sincere condolences for the loss of lives in many member states due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It is highly commendable that even during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Agency has continued its valuable work under the able leadership of the Director General, despite many difficulties.

I would like to acknowledge the important work the Agency is doing in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic. I am grateful to the Agency for its assistance rendered to Bangladesh and many other Member States in their efforts to address the current COVID-19 pandemic through the Zoonotic Disease Integrated Action (ZODIAC) project. I strongly support the ZODIAC project, which is an important vehicle to tackle Covid-19 pandemic and beyond.

Mr. President,

I take this opportunity to inform that our Hon'ble Prime Minister Her Excellency Sheikh Hasina has enabled our nation to think big and undertake a brave, new challenge to become a developed one by 2041 and the attainment of Sustainable Development Goals by 2030. In this pursuit we have taken nuclear energy as one of the key players in power generation.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh considers nuclear energy as a safe, environmentally friendly and economically viable source of electricity generation. Bangladesh is firmly committed to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in compliance with the relevant safety, safeguard and security measures.

The beginning of construction of Unit-1 and Unit-2 of Rooppur NPP on 30 November 2017 and 14 July, respectively marked a significant milestone in the development of nuclear power programme of Bangladesh. The construction work of our Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is going on despite the current pandemic, strictly maintaining safety protocols. I am pleased to inform the conference that on September 14 of this year, Bangladesh started installation of Reactor Pressure Vessel of the Unit 1 of Rooppur NPP. We expect that Unit 1 and Unit 2 of the Plant will be connected to the national Grid in 2023 and 2024 respectively.

Through a transparent and concise nuclear policy of the government, coupled with tremendous efforts of national stakeholders, bilateral partners and the solid support of the IAEA, Bangladesh is successfully implementing nuclear energy programme, which could be a stellar example to newcomer countries to NPP.

Mr. President,

Bangladesh has followed the IAEA's Milestones Approach in its development of the national nuclear infrastructure, completing several IAEA peer review services to date and joining all relevant international conventions in the area of nuclear safety, security and safeguards, and implementing a comprehensive Technical Cooperation (TC) programme with the Agency. Bangladesh is preparing for completing 5 important IAEA missions in the areas of nuclear safety, security, nuclear safeguards and emergency response and management before fuel loading to Unit 1 of Rooppur NPP by 2023.

For the Rooppur NPP, we are working closely with IAEA. Based on the findings of the INIR missions, an Integrated Work Plan for Bangladesh was concluded with the IAEA, which has channeled IAEA support since 2013 to the development of human resources and infrastructure of Bangladesh nuclear power programme. Bangladesh is one of newcomer country who successfully develops and implements such work plan with the IAEA.

Mr. President,

The TC programme has also been critical in supporting the country's non-power nuclear applications in the sectors of health, agriculture, environment, etc. those are contributing to socio-economic development of our country. We hope that such support in various sectors from the IAEA would continue in future.

Mr. President,

Lastly, I reiterate Bangladesh's firm support to the mandate and activities of the Agency for a better world through peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

I thank you, Mr. President.