

General Conference

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Fiftieth regular session

Message from the Prime Minister of India on the occasion of the 50th regular session of the General Conference

The Director General has received a letter from the Resident Representative of India dated 19 September 2006 conveying a message from the Prime Minister of India. As requested in the letter, the message is circulated herewith for information.



प्रधान मंत्री

Prime Minister

MESSAGE

I am happy to convey my greetings to Members of the International Atomic Energy Agency, its Director-General, and members of IAEA Secretariat on the occasion of this 50th General Conference. Over the past five decades, the Agency has made commendable progress in fulfilling its objectives as laid down in its Statute. The Nobel Peace Prize awarded to Dr. ElBaradei and the Agency last year is a timely and well-deserved tribute to the IAEA's contribution.

The International Atomic Energy Agency is an unique organization in the entire UN system, founded on a strong science base and dedicated to spreading understanding of and knowledge about the benefits of atomic energy in a safe and secure manner, with special attention to those areas of the world where developmental needs and aspirations are yet to be fulfilled and are therefore most pressing. With issues related to energy resource sustainability assuming increasing salience and global climate change looming large as arguably the most serious challenge of our time, atomic energy with its immense energy potential and readily available and deployable technologies has become an inevitable and indispensable part of the solution.

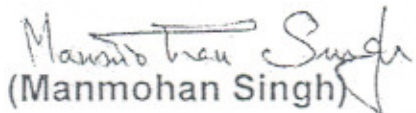
Nuclear energy being unique in its ability to regenerate more fuel from uranium and thorium several ten-folds while producing energy, offers us the possibility of meeting global energy requirements in a non-polluting and sustainable manner. However, if we are to be successful in realizing the potential of the atom in meeting our needs, we need to act in concert consistent with the spirit of global harmony and adhering to our respective international commitments. The IAEA and Director-General deserve high compliments for ensuring that the Agency is an effective platform for the global community to work together in its noble mission of 'atoms for peace and prosperity'.

India, home to one-sixth of the world population and having embarked on a rapid economic growth path, has a strong interest in utilizing the full potential of atomic energy for national development. I am confident this will be realized, based on our natural endowment of vast thorium resources and the development of effective technologies for their utilization.

We have developed advanced technological capability based on our own self-reliant efforts, while having maintained an unblemished record of responsible behaviour. I am glad that the emerging possibility for expanding civil nuclear cooperation between India and the international community would supplement and complement our domestic efforts to meet the developmental aspirations of our people through additional nuclear energy inputs. We look forward to cooperating with international partners in realising this possibility.

While nuclear power is of crucial importance for sustainable development, of equal significance are other peaceful applications of atomic energy. The Agency's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) is one such important effort which I am happy to learn is being given special emphasis. India having developed significant experience in affordable cancer – related programmes has been supporting this activity actively, and would be pleased to offer a recently developed Cobalt – 60 teletherapy machine (BHABHATRON) as a contribution to the Agency's PACT.

It is my hope that the fiftieth session of the General Conference would be an important milestone in the ongoing and future work of the Agency. I wish you all productive deliberations and progress in your important tasks. My greetings and good wishes to all.


(Manmohan Singh)

New Delhi
September 18, 2006