

61st IAEA General Conference

18 - 22 September 2016

Statement by Denmark

As delivered by Ambassador Liselotte Plesner, Resident Representative

Madame President

Congratulations on your election as President of the General Conference, you can count on our support. Being only the third woman in this important position demonstrates that we still have some miles to walk on the gender equality path. We can do it together.

Denmark associates itself with the EU statement delivered earlier this week.

My government warmly congratulates Director General Amano on his re-appointment. In these turbulent times, continuity of leadership is crucial for the IAEA to act as a stronghold of rules-based international cooperation, providing security and a better world for all. We fully support the Agency in its endeavours across the spectrum of its mandate.

We were very pleased to welcome Director General Amano to Copenhagen and Greenland earlier this year. The DG visited the capital of Nuuk in Greenland and Kvanefjeld in the south of Greenland - the site of the rare earth and uranium mine project. The visit in Greenland was by invitation of the Greenlandic government, and the Premier of Greenland, Kim Kielsen, accompanied the DG during the visit. The visit confirmed the high value of the cooperation between the Kingdom of Denmark and the IAEA in our preparations for uranium extraction. The Danish and Greenlandic governments are determined jointly to ensure that any uranium extraction in Greenland is fully in line with the highest international standards, most notably the IAEA's. Greenland is now covered by all IAEA conventions in the area of safety.

Madame President

For Denmark, the IAEA's contribution to preventing the spread of nuclear weapons is of paramount importance. As the current development of the

DPRK's nuclear and ballistic missile programme shows, nuclear proliferation is a major threat against international peace and security. We strongly condemn the DPRK's repeated nuclear and missile tests and underline the essential role the IAEA must eventually play in verifying the DPRK's nuclear programme. The DPRK must abandon its nuclear programme and live up to all its international obligations and commitments.

Denmark strongly supports the IAEA's verification and monitoring of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. We welcome the ongoing implementation of this agreement and underline the need for sustained and full compliance. Building confidence requires that Member States are provided with sufficient and regular information on the implementation of all nuclear-related commitments; the Director General has our full support in this matter.

The integrity of the IAEA safeguards system is vital. Now, more than ever, it is essential to uphold the NPT-based regime. Any cases of non-compliance need to be rectified to preserve the integrity of the system. This also applies to the Syrian case.

Madame President

We also look to the Agency to provide standards and guidance on nuclear safety and security including for new technologies such as transportable nuclear power plants. Developments of technologies call for development of safety and security accordingly. Any accident or incident can have cross-border effects and thus we all have a clear interest in promoting nuclear safety and nuclear security worldwide. Furthermore, high standards of safety and security, as well as ensuring that no nuclear material is diverted to military purposes, are crucial in laying the grounds for responsible peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology.

Denmark is a significant contributor to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund. At the same time, we are concerned by the heavy reliance of nuclear security work on voluntary contributions and call for adequate resources being made available from the regular budget. We welcome the small, but positive step in this direction agreed for the 2018 budget.

We warmly welcome the entry-into-force last year of the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. While now focusing on the implementation of this instrument, we should also analyse the need for and feasibility of further steps to close the gaps in the international legal framework covering nuclear security.

Madame President

Turning to the issue of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, Denmark has made the decision not to include nuclear power in our own energy mix, as we base our national long-term energy production plans on more sustainable forms of energy, notably wind power. We respect, however, the choice of other Member States and the Agency's statutory obligations.

At the same time we believe that nuclear technology can make a significant contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and fully support the IAEA's technical cooperation work in such crucial areas as human health, food security, water and the environment. We have been pleased to pledge our full share of the TCF target for 2018. In a world of rapid technological development, we want to contribute to the IAEA's capacity to make the peaceful uses of nuclear technology available to foster development and growth.

Madame President

In closing let me thank most sincerely the Director General and his dedicated staff for their invaluable contribution to building a safer and more prosperous world. We will continue our cooperation with them and with our fellow Board members to advance the mandate of the IAEA.

Thank you, Madame President