

**59TH IAEA GENERAL CONFERENCE
14-18 SEPTEMBER 2015
STATEMENT BY SINGAPORE
DELIVERED BY
AMBASSADOR FOO KOK JWEE
RESIDENT REPRESENTATIVE
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SINGAPORE
TO THE IAEA**

Mr President
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates

1 My delegation would like to extend our warmest congratulations to Ambassador Filippo Formica of Italy on his election as President of the 59th IAEA General Conference. You can count on the full support and cooperation of my delegation to ensure a successful General Conference.

2 We would also like to commend and extend our appreciation to Ambassador Aliyar Lebbe Abdul Azeez of Sri Lanka, President of the 58th IAEA General Conference, Mr Yukiya Amano, Director-General of the IAEA and the Secretariat for the good work they have done in the past year.

3 We congratulate and warmly welcome Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, and Turkmenistan as the newest members of the IAEA.

Mr President,

4 2015 is a year of missed opportunities. We are disappointed that States Parties to the *Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons* (NPT) failed to adopt a Final Outcome Document by consensus at the NPT Review Conference (Rev Con) in May 2015. Discussions on the progress on the three pillars of the NPT have become more political and divisive. The *Conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction* remains in limbo. Consequently, the gulf of mistrust between the Nuclear Weapon States and Non-Nuclear Weapon States continues to widen. In short, the 2015 NPT Rev Con missed the opportunity to decisively dispel doubts about the legitimacy and relevance of the Treaty.

5 Singapore still firmly believes that the NPT remains the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation regime. It is not in the interest of any party, including the Nuclear Weapon States, for the NPT to fail. It is therefore more important than before for all NPT States Parties to reaffirm their commitment to uphold the NPT and fulfil their respective commitments and obligations. Singapore will do our part and continue to support all efforts to advance global disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and the right of sovereign states to the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology in a safe, secure and safeguarded manner.

6 We had similarly hoped that the *Diplomatic Conference to consider a proposal to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS)* held in February 2015 would yield a good outcome with the adoption of the proposed Swiss amendment to the CNS. This would have sent a strong and positive signal to the public of our collective commitment to take concrete steps to raise the standards of global nuclear safety.

7 Although the “Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety” is not legally binding, we urge all Contracting Parties to the CNS, in particular those with nuclear installations and those planning to embark on a civilian nuclear programme, to implement the safety objectives contained in the Vienna Declaration expeditiously and in good faith. We also call on all Contracting Parties to strengthen the peer review mechanism of the Convention through an agreed process. Singapore will fulfill our responsibilities and cooperate with the IAEA and Member States to contribute towards the strengthening of international and regional standards of nuclear safety.

Mr President,

8 The IAEA’s work to promote the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear energy has become more important and challenging than ever.

9 The DPRK’s nuclear programme remains an issue of international concern. It unilaterally withdrew its membership from the NPT in January 2003, and ceased all cooperation with the IAEA since April 2009. Singapore urges Pyongyang to take the necessary steps to address the international community’s concerns, comply fully with relevant UN Security Council resolutions, return to the NPT, and resume all cooperation with the IAEA immediately.

10 The agreement between the E3+3 and Iran on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is one of the key developments this year. Singapore welcomes the JCPOA, and commends the hard work and efforts of all the parties involved. The agreement is a positive step in the right direction, but the implementation of the agreement will be especially crucial. We urge all parties to fulfil their respective obligations and implement the provisions of the agreement in good faith. The IAEA should also be fully supported in its work to implement the relevant provisions in the JCPOA and the United Nations Security Council Resolution 2231 (2015).

11 We also urge Iran to extend its full cooperation to the IAEA in the “Road-map for the Clarification of Past and Present Outstanding Issues regarding Iran’s Nuclear Program” signed with the IAEA on 14 July 2015. The resolution of all past and present outstanding issues regarding Iran’s nuclear programme is crucial in addressing the legitimate concerns of the international community about the nature of Iran’s nuclear programme. In this regard, we look forward to the Director General’s next report on this issue.

Mr President

12 Singapore reiterates our strong support for the Agency’s role in nuclear verification and safeguards implementation. We appreciate the Secretariat’s sustained efforts to engage Member States on safeguards-related issues, and we look forward to maintaining this conversation, especially on sensitive issues such as progress in the development and implementation of safeguards under the State Level Concept.

13 The humanitarian dimension of the impact of nuclear weapons has gained greater prominence and political support over the past year. For the first time, two Nuclear Weapon States attended the Third International Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons in Vienna last December. This subject was also an important element of the discussions at the 2015 NPT Rev Con. To date, 115 States Parties, including Singapore, have endorsed the Humanitarian Pledge. While we collectively deliberate the next steps forward in a transparent and inclusive manner, we urge all States Parties to uphold the NPT, in particular Article VI, to eliminate the risks posed by nuclear weapons to mankind.

14 The IAEA continues to play a central role in the establishment of a robust and comprehensive global nuclear security framework. Singapore acceded

to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, or CPPNM, and accepted its 2005 Amendment last September. The Convention came into force for Singapore on 22 October 2014. 14 more States Parties must ratify the 2005 Amendment before it can enter into force. We strongly urge States Parties who have not ratified the 2005 Amendment to do so as soon as possible.

Mr President,

15 Singapore has consistently argued that nuclear safety is an issue of concern to *all* states, not merely states with nuclear installations. This is because nuclear accidents, such as the Fukushima Daiichi accident, can quickly escalate into major transboundary problems.

16 We thank the Director-General for his comprehensive report on the Fukushima Daiichi Accident. The report serves as a sober reminder against complacency, and that countries operating Nuclear Power Plants bear the utmost responsibility to their own people and the international community to ensure that their regulatory frameworks, plant design, operational safety processes and culture, emergency preparedness and response capabilities, among others, are robust at all times. Comprehensive and systematic periodic safety assessments for existing installations should also be carried out by Member States to complement these measures. We look forward to the Secretariat's integration of the important observations and lessons contained in the Director-General's report in its regular programme of work.

17 The Secretariat and Member States have made significant progress in the implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, which will be integrated into the Agency's regular programme of work after 2015. In addition, my delegation's view is that the Secretariat should consider drawing up a multi-year nuclear safety strategy to provide the Agency with strategic focus and clear direction on the issue of nuclear safety beyond 2015. This would allow the Agency to ensure the implementation of the outstanding projects under the Action Plan, and apply lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident and completed projects under the Action Plan.

Mr President,

18 Please allow me to now update the Conference on some related developments from my region. We were honoured to welcome Director-General Amano to Singapore in January this year. During that visit, Mr Amano delivered a

public lecture titled “Atoms for Peace in the 21st Century” as a Distinguished Speaker of the Singapore Energy Market Authority. He also met Minister in the Prime Minister’s Office, Second Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Second Minister for the Environment and Water Resources Grace Fu. They had a fruitful exchange of views on how our region can work more closely with the IAEA in areas of nuclear safety and peaceful applications of nuclear science.

19 Mr Amano and Minister Fu also renewed a Memorandum of Understanding of between Singapore and the IAEA (Singapore-IAEA Third Country Training Programme) to provide joint technical assistance to other developing Member States. Singapore and the IAEA had been collaborating to jointly provide technical assistance to promote the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technologies since 2000. To date, we have organised 25 scientific visits, 104 fellowship attachments as well as 32 regional training events.

20 Under the enhanced MOU signed this year, Singapore and the IAEA will provide technical assistance to developing countries in more areas such as nuclear medicine, nuclear safety, public education, and the environment. During his visit to Singapore, Mr Amano also visited a number of research and medical institutions through which Singapore can contribute to support the IAEA’s work, in particular in the field of nuclear medicine. We will continue to strengthen our cooperation with the Agency, both bilaterally and regionally, in the area of technical cooperation.

21 At the regional level, Southeast Asian countries are strengthening cooperation on nuclear issues through the ASEAN Network of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy or ASEANTOM. Even though ASEANTOM is a relatively new body, its members are making progress through practical cooperation in areas such as emergency preparedness and response, and the sharing of environmental radiation monitoring data.

22 ASEANTOM is also seeking cooperation and building institutional linkages with other partners with more extensive experience in nuclear issues. For example, ASEANTOM has submitted an IAEA Regional Technical Cooperation project to support the establishment of a regional environmental radioactivity database and an emergency preparedness and response framework. This project would commence in 2016. The European Commission is also supporting a feasibility study on regional cooperation in emergency preparedness and response in Southeast Asia.

23 We look forward to stronger cooperation between ASEAN and IAEA. The IAEA has been invited to ASEANTOM meetings since 2013, and we welcome the IAEA's continued participation. ASEAN has also invited the IAEA Secretariat to the ASEAN Ministers on Energy Meeting (AMEM) to brief the Ministers on key nuclear developments.

24 We also reaffirm our commitment to work closely with the Nuclear Weapon States on the early signing and ratification of the Protocol on the Treaty on the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone without reservations. Our view is that the establishment of nuclear weapon-free zones strengthens global peace and security. However, the establishment of such zones must be aligned with the object and purpose of the relevant treaties and their protocols. In this regard, we urge the Nuclear Weapon States to sign and ratify the relevant treaties and protocols without reservations or unilateral interpretative declarations, and to withdraw them where they exist.

Mr President,

25 We live in very challenging times. All over the world, we see the UN and international organisations struggling to cope with the multitude and magnitude of challenges confronting us, ranging from terrorism to climate change to irregular migration. I had lamented missed opportunities at the beginning of my statement. The IAEA has done good work and made significant contributions to the international community. But it too has significant challenges ahead. Let us all commit to work together in the spirit of cooperation and mutual respect to support the IAEA and the Director-General in fulfilling their duties and mandate in the coming year.

26 Thank you, Mr President.

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