

PHILIPPINES

Statement
H.E. Ambassador Lourdes O. Yparraguirre
Permanent Representative to the
UN and Other International Organizations in Vienna

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Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines associates itself with the statement delivered by Egypt on behalf of the NAM States parties to the NPT.

Since the 2010 NPT Review Conference, significant developments in the area of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy have allowed us to move forward in implementing the Action Points under this cluster.

The IAEA continued to play an important role in helping countries achieve their Millennium Development Goals through its Technical Cooperation Programme and various activities in nuclear applications, despite limited resources and the growing number of requests for assistance from developing Member States. The Philippines places paramount importance in the IAEA TC Program, which constitute the main statutory vehicle for transferring nuclear technology to developing countries, and express support for all efforts aimed at enhancing its efficiency and effectiveness. However, this cannot be fully achieved if we fail to ensure that the Agency's resources for technical cooperation activities are sufficient, assured and predictable. IAEA Member

States should, therefore, exercise political will and show commitment to finally addressing this long-standing issue.

We welcome the commitment of the IAEA Director General to highlight the Agency's promotional activities, pursuant to its mandate under Article 2 of its Statute, in addressing basic human needs, including in the areas of human health, food and nutrition, agriculture and the environment. This generates global recognition of the role of peaceful uses of nuclear technology in various non-power applications that help countries achieve their socio-economic development goals.

The Philippines also acknowledges the support being provided by the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) in providing extra-budgetary support to enable the implementation of unfunded TC projects. The Philippines believes that the PUI serves as a useful mechanism through which the IAEA's role in the promotion of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy may be further enhanced, while assisting States such as the Philippines that are committed to their non-proliferation obligations realize their development goals. We welcome the announcements made this morning of additional contributions, and urge States in a position to do so to likewise contribute to this worthwhile initiative. The IAEA Secretariat should also exercise transparency in the management of PUI, with primary consideration being placed on the requests and priorities of Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

The Philippines believes that the inalienable right to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy enshrined in Article IV of the Treaty necessarily comes with concomitant responsibilities. We stress the importance of nuclear safety and nuclear security in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

The events of the past year presented significant challenges to the work of the IAEA. The Fukushima nuclear accident shook the international community's perceptions of nuclear power, including the safety of existing power plants and new facilities proposed to be built. It also compelled a number of countries, including the Philippines, to rethink their respective national positions on nuclear power.

However, as oil prices continue to soar and concerns over climate change persist, interest in nuclear power remains and countries continue to turn to the IAEA for assistance in the development or expansion of their national nuclear power programs. While presenting challenges, the Fukushima accident also posed great opportunities to discuss ways for improving the Agency's work in nuclear safety. Confidence in the use of nuclear energy hinges on the continuous improvement and strengthening of nuclear safety.

The IAEA plays a unique and central role in promoting international cooperation in nuclear safety and is well-placed in responding to the requests of its Member States for assistance in the development of a safety infrastructure for a nuclear power program. We believe that the IAEA should continue to provide assistance to countries such as the Philippines that are still considering the inclusion of nuclear power in its energy mix, particularly in the development of a regulatory framework, capacity-building, and the management of radioactive waste.

In the coming year, we believe that IAEA Member States should build further on the implementation of the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety that was adopted by the IAEA General Conference last year. These include greater commitment to IAEA Safety Standards, reviewing global frameworks for emergency preparedness and response, utilization of knowledge networks and enhanced regional cooperation.

For its part, the Philippines is in the process of undertaking its domestic legal procedures for the ratification of the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management, as called for in Action 59 of the Final Document. Once realized, this will be our contribution to the strengthening of the global safety regulatory framework.

On nuclear security, we believe that IAEA Member States should endeavor to implement best practices and recommendations as contained in the IAEA Nuclear Security Guidelines principles in maintaining the security of nuclear installations and facilities, as well as nuclear and radioactive materials in situ or in transport.

We are in the process of amending our national legislation to enable us to accede to the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.

Outside of the IAEA, we also work with our bilateral partners, such as through the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, the US Department of Energy Megaports Initiative Project and the EU Cooperation in the Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy framework, to enable us to further strengthen our national nuclear security framework. The Philippines was also one of the Participating States in the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit hosted by the Republic of Korea last March. While fully endorsing the NSS process and outcome, we believe that NSS Participating States should now focus on finding ways to derive wider, if not universal, endorsement of the outcomes of its meetings, as this would greatly support the enhancement of nuclear security worldwide.

Thank you, Mister Chairman.