

IAEA 55th General Conference 19-23 September 2011

Statement by Denmark as delivered by Ambassador John Bernhard Permanent Representative to the IAEA

Mr. President

At the outset let me congratulate you on your election as President of the General Conference and assure you of our full support for your endeavours.

Mr. President

We were all horrified by the destruction wrought by the earthquake and tsunami that struck Japan in March this year. The accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant has demonstrated the need for the international community to come together to substantially strengthen nuclear safety around the world. It also made it clear that increasing the role of the IAEA in providing assistance and information to Member States is a pressing necessity, both to prevent nuclear accidents and to ensure timely, precise and accessible information in cases of emergency. The Agency began to address this challenge with the Ministerial Meeting in June. The Action Plan before us sets out a number of commitments on behalf of the Secretariat and Member States which is certainly a step forward. Nonetheless, in our view, there is more to be accomplished as we gain experience in the implementation of the Plan.

We continue to consider it particularly important to improve the peer review mechanisms and make them more binding, to implement mandatory IAEA safety inspections and to make reports public. Proposals for strengthening the Nuclear Safety Convention, inter alia with legally binding IAEA safety standards, also continue to merit strong attention. The Action Plan, then, cannot be the end of the process of post-Fukushima attention to strengthening nuclear safety, but rather the beginning. The high-level meeting in New York on nuclear safety later this week will hopefully provide an impetus to the IAEA's continued and concerted efforts in this field.

Mr. President

The IAEA will continue to play a central role in the world's efforts to prevent nuclear proliferation. With its highly professional and dedicated staff, the IAEA, through its inspection procedures, serves to verify peaceful use of nuclear technologies and offers us all essential assurances in that regard. The work of the IAEA offers its member states the opportunity to clear themselves of any suspicion of wrong-doing through full and unrestricted cooperation with the Agency. As experience shows, however, the IAEA can only play this role to the full when it has the necessary tools in place. Denmark is convinced that a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement in combination with an Additional Protocol constitutes today's verification standard pursuant to the NPT. We call for universal accession to and implementation of both instruments.

The UN Security Council also has a key responsibility for non-proliferation. Denmark continues to fully support Security Council Resolutions 1887 and 1540,

whose adoption marked a fundamental step forward. The Security Council has also adopted a number of country-specific resolutions with the object of upholding the integrity and efficiency of the non-proliferation regime. It is essential that all countries fully implement the Security Council's resolutions on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and on Iran.

With regard to Iran, we share the serious concern expressed in a succession of reports by the IAEA Director General regarding the failure of Iran to extend the cooperation to the Agency that would be necessary to allow it to confirm that all nuclear material in Iran is in peaceful activities and to dispel doubts about possible military dimensions of its nuclear programme. We urge Iran to comply fully with all resolutions of the Security Council, the Board of Governors and with its safeguards agreement. Iran's continuing enrichment of uranium to the 20% level in contravention of those resolutions is one alarming factor.

As regards Syria, Denmark noted with serious concern the conclusion of the Agency in the Director General's report to the Board of Governors last June that the destroyed building at Dair Alzour was very likely a nuclear reactor and should have been declared by Syria. Denmark therefore found necessary the resolution adopted by the Board on the implementation of Syria's Safeguards Agreement, which referred the matter to the Security Council. We join the Director General in urging Syria to fully implement its Safeguards Agreement and to bring into force an Additional Protocol in order to facilitate the work of the Agency to verify the completeness and correctness of Syria's declarations. We strongly hope that Syria will implement its promise made in June of increased cooperation.

With regard to the DPRK, Denmark is very concerned that the IAEA is not being permitted to fulfil its mandate. We strongly support calls on the DPRK to comply with its international obligations and commitments as well as to allow an early return of IAEA inspectors.

Mr. President,

Following the successful conduct of the NPT Review Conference in 2010 it is important that we all prioritize the implementation of the Action Plan adopted there and avoid steps that might jeopardize this work. We support the IAEA in its role in terms of the Action Plan, and we welcome the consensus reached on holding, later this year, an IAEA Forum relating to the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons in the Middle East. We believe that this Forum can provide valuable input, including on the way to the 2012 Conference mandated by the NPT Review Conference.

Mr. President,

Denmark highly values the IAEA's work on nuclear security. The need to protect ourselves against nuclear terrorism and other malicious acts involving nuclear material is ever higher on the world's agenda, and rightly so. Denmark is pleased to have been able to contribute to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund in the past and is also committed to working to ensure that the Fund has sufficient resources to step up its work to help all Member States protect themselves and each other against nuclear terrorism. Denmark is pleased that the IAEA budget for 2012 continues the positive trend in this regard. Denmark is ready to increase its

involvement in the promotion of nuclear security and to contribute to implementing the Work Plan adopted at the 2010 Nuclear Security Summit and to taking the NSS process forward.

Mr. President,

Turning to the issue of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, Denmark has made the decision that nuclear power should not be included in our own energy mix, as we do not consider it a sustainable form of energy. While we, therefore, are not in favour of a promotional role for the Agency in the field of nuclear power for electricity generation, we respect the choice of other Member States and the Agency's statutory obligations. We also recognize the interest of an increasing number of states in introducing nuclear power and highly value the IAEA's contribution to ensuring that this happens in the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions.

Since the last General Conference, the Board of Governors has decided to establish an IAEA LEU Bank in order to provide assurances of supply of LEU for nuclear fuel. Denmark supported this initiative and others in the area of multilateral assurances of supply in order to provide proliferation-safe options for those countries who have chosen or will chose to use nuclear power.

Mr. President,

Allow me to reiterate Denmark's appreciation for the highly professional work of the IAEA also in the field of technical cooperation on peaceful applications.

Denmark has, again this year, pledged its full contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund in order to support the Agency's work to combat hunger, disease and poverty. We consider it highly relevant that the Director General has chosen to focus on the use of nuclear techniques in the area of tackling water scarcity.

Mr. President,

The world will continue to rely on the IAEA for expertise and support in all its fields of activities. I wish to conclude by thanking the Director General and all his dedicated staff members for their invaluable contribution to building a safer and more prosperous world.

Thank you, Mr. President