Mr. President,

1. At the outset, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for his presentation of the annual report of the Agency (GC(57)/3), for the period of 1 January to 31 December 2012. Let me also congratulate Mr. Amano for his re-appointment as Director-General, and I look forward to his continued commitment and stewardship of the Agency.

Mr. President,

2. Malaysia welcomes the Bahamas, Brunei Darussalam and Swaziland as new member States of the IAEA in 2013. My delegation believes in the strengthening and universalization of the membership of the Agency, in order for it to effectively carry out its mandate. In this regard, we are pleased to note that despite the limitations of resources due to economic difficulties, the Agency has continued to proceed with its work as scheduled.

3. As highlighted in the report of the IAEA and the statement by the Director-General, the work of the Agency continues to be of major significance this year. The continued growth of nuclear power usage, especially in Asia, will require much of the IAEA’s attention and resources. Global food, health and environmental challenges are increasingly being addressed through civilian applications of nuclear technology, including those facilitated by the Agency. In the wake of the Fukushima incident, the IAEA has also played a crucial role through various nuclear safety and security initiatives. At the same time, it continues to provide technical cooperation in developing member States’ capacities to use nuclear technology for development purposes.

Mr. President,
4. Malaysia believes that the sovereign right to use nuclear energy is concomitant with the obligation to ensure that it is used in a safe, secure and peaceful manner. We are improving our regulatory framework, and are currently revising the relevant legislation towards the enactment of a comprehensive nuclear law. This law will incorporate provisions for nuclear safety, security and safeguards, and enable the ratification of relevant international nuclear instruments including on nuclear liability.

5. We welcome the successful convening of the International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century, held in St. Petersburg from 27 to 29 June 2013. This was a timely initiative by the Agency and the Russian Federation, as rapid socio-economic developments have increased the demand for nuclear power as a reliable and sustainable option for an energy mix. Malaysia’s delegation to that Conference, headed by the Honourable Minister of Energy, Green Technology and Water, took careful note of the various approaches on nuclear programmes proposed during the Conference. We maintain the view that any decisions on a nuclear programme would have to be made based on a country’s needs, the concerns of its peoples, the environment and the state of readiness in terms of infrastructure, human resources, and political situation.

6. My delegation also recognizes the importance of regional cooperation in nuclear regulatory control. In recent months, we joined our ASEAN neighbours in working towards the establishment of the ASEAN Network of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies or Relevant Authorities (ASEANTOM). In this regard, Malaysia welcomes Thailand’s hosting of the first ASEANTOM Meeting from 2 to 5 September 2013. It is our collective hope that these efforts will ultimately contribute to the goal of preserving Southeast Asia as a Nuclear Weapons Free Zone.

Mr. President,

7. The Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) entitles States Parties to have access to nuclear technology, provides for exchange of nuclear knowledge and scientific information, as well as fosters cooperation amongst States to develop peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In this connection, my delegation highly appreciates the IAEA’s role in assisting States in planning for and use of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes.

8. Malaysia continues to accord high importance to the peaceful uses of nuclear science and technology in agriculture, biotechnology, industry, environment and medical applications. In this context, we have always believed that research and development and knowledge sharing are the keys to successful and sustainable development of nuclear technology by member States. We therefore attach great importance to projects being conducted under the Agency’s Coordinated Research Activities. In light of the significance of the Seibersdorf Nuclear Application laboratories supporting nuclear science activities especially in developing countries, Malaysia would like to lend its support to the planned modernization of the laboratories. We believe that this would be a valuable opportunity for Malaysian scientists and researchers to gain training and hands-on experience.
Mr. President,

9. Let me now turn to the issue of nuclear safety and security, which my delegation has always viewed with the utmost importance. Malaysia acknowledges the continuous efforts by the IAEA to strengthen the nuclear safety regime and implement the Action Plan on Nuclear Safety following the Fukushima nuclear accident. Together with Japan, we co-chaired the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in December 2012. We have always called for nuclear safety to be addressed in a multilateral environment and according to internationally approved standards in which the IAEA should play a central role, and the Conference was thus a significant step in this regard.

10. Malaysia also welcomes the successful convening of the International Conference on Nuclear Security in Vienna from 1 to 5 July 2013. This event had renewed the commitment of the Agency and its member States towards a more effective worldwide nuclear security regime. However, my delegation would like to reiterate that the issue of nuclear security should not be seen in isolation, but instead be addressed within the larger context of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

11. On Malaysia’s part, we have established our national nuclear security regime through various measures. We have strengthened the nuclear security infrastructure, in particular the detection capabilities in our major port of entries and international borders. We have complemented this with established standard operating procedures and a system of national coordination between different Ministries and enforcement agencies. Our efforts have been noted by the IAEA, and Malaysia is now recognized by the Agency as a National Security Support Centre with a regional role and capacity. In this regard, Malaysia stands ready to share our experiences with other member States in setting up a national nuclear security regime.

Mr. President,

12. On the Agency’s Technical Cooperation (TC) Programme, Malaysia reiterates its long-standing position that it should be based on member States’ needs and requests. As such, the Programme should take into account the evolving national stakeholder requirements as well as the need for sufficient, assured and predictable funding.

13. This notwithstanding, Malaysia continues our active implementation of national TC projects as well as Regional Cooperative Arrangement projects under the current cycle. We have also contributed to the programme by providing training, expertise and contributions in-kind to other member States. Malaysia has also been entrusted with the hosting of the Post Graduate Education Course in Radiation Protection.

14. However, as we are made to understand, project progress evaluation is made based primarily on spending or encumbrances. My delegation is of the view that the evaluation should take into consideration all measurable parameters of the project, particularly the overall impact made against the set objectives.

Thank you, Mr. President.