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Statement

by

Ambassador Masood Khan,
Permanent Representative of Pakistan
to the United Nations
on agenda item 88, entitled:
“Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency”
68th Session of the UNGA

New York, 05 November 2013
Mr. President,

We congratulate Mr. Yukiya Amano on his re-election as the Director General of the IAEA. He will have Pakistan’s full support in his endeavours. We also congratulate Brunei Darussalam and Commonwealth of the Bahamas for having joined the Agency as new members.

Mr. President,

We commend the Agency for producing a very comprehensive report and reiteration of its key mandatory statutory objective i.e. to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world. Pakistan values the Agency’s role and contribution in this area.

We share the Agency’s assessment that nuclear energy would continue to be one of the preferred sources of viable, safe and sustainable alternative in the future, despite the justifiable public anxiety that arose in the wake of Fukushima accident.

Recent international conferences, especially Rio+20, has shifted the emphasis to sustainable energy for all. The report rightly notes that nuclear energy has low carbon source that minimizes green houses gas emissions and mitigates the impact of climatic disruption.

Mr. President,

In the past five decades, Pakistan has sought to harness nuclear technology for our development priorities in a variety of ways and in collaboration with the Agency. Pakistan has also been one of the beneficiaries of the Agency’s Technical Cooperation Programme.

Pakistan is facing severe energy deficit, as industrial, agricultural and consumer demand for electricity increases with the growing population. To meet this demand we are tapping into all sources – hydro power, solar and wind power, and nuclear.

Three nuclear power plants are already on line and have been performing very well. The oldest of these was commissioned way back in 1972. Besides these three, two more nuclear power plants, 340 MWe each, are under construction and are expected to be commissioned by 2016. Additional reactors are also planned. All nuclear power plants in Pakistan are under IAEA Safeguards.

Pakistan is an active, mainstream partner in the global non-proliferation efforts. We have over four decades of experience in safely operating the nuclear power plants. We have the requisite expertise, well-trained trained manpower and infrastructure to produce civil nuclear energy. Pakistan therefore fully qualifies to be a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group.
Mr. President,

In the health sector, 18 nuclear medicine and oncology hospitals are providing diagnostics and treatment to several hundred thousand patients each year throughout the country. Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission has also established educational and training programmes in radiation oncology, nuclear medicine and medical physics. Pakistan is willing to offer expert services and training facilities to other countries in collaboration with the IAEA.

For a country of over 180 million people, food security is of critical importance. In the last fifty years, four agricultural centres have been engaged in a variety of R&D activities, leading to higher yield and better quality agricultural products. R&D work in the physical sciences and engineering remains another priority area in which important gains have been made including in water resource management and production of most radioisotopes required by the nuclear medical centres and the private sector.

Mr. President,

In tandem with the growth in our nuclear power programme, our regulatory infrastructure has also gained strength and become robust. From its establishment 12 years ago, the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) has evolved into a strong regulator and a licensing body. The PNRA has forged multiple links with the IAEA and regulators of other countries.

Pakistan lauds the leading role that the Agency has played in harmonizing and coordinating global efforts, in the wake of Fukushima incident, to improve nuclear safety including through convening of the Ministerial Conference, meetings at experts level and preparation of a comprehensive Nuclear Safety Action Plan.

Pakistan too has been actively engaged in drawing the lessons from this incident. As a result of stress tests, a comprehensive framework i.e. Fukushima Response Action Plan was put in place in June 2011 for all nuclear power plants. Accordingly, necessary revisions, upgradation of emergency preparedness measures and Internal Peer Reviews for operational safety have been undertaken. Recognizing the long-term nature of these actions, work on these aspects will continue. We have invited and supported WANO Peer Review missions and also welcomed individual experts under the aegis of IAEA. We plan to further deepen this cooperation.

Mr. President,

Pakistan has been an active participant of the Nuclear Security Summit process. The NSS process has been a vital catalyst for nuclear security. We call for broadening its base, with the passage of time, to make it more inclusive and representative.
We compliment the IAEA for organizing a highly successful ministerial conference in Vienna early this year. We believe that the IAEA has a central and leading role in the international nuclear security architecture, as well in the Summits’ successor arrangements post-2016.

Over the years, Pakistan has worked closely with the IAEA to strengthen nuclear security. We are implementing a Nuclear Security Action Plan in cooperation with the IAEA.

Pakistan attaches the highest importance to ensuring safety and security of its nuclear programme. We have an unblemished record of running a safe, secure and safeguarded civil nuclear programme for the last forty years. Pakistan’s nuclear materials, facilities and assets are safe and secure.

Mr. President,

Our nuclear security regime is anchored in the principle of multilayered defense for the entire spectrum of any nuclear security threat - insider, outsider, and cyber threats - and is guided by the concept of the Five Ds, that is, to deter, detect, delay, defend, and destroy.

We have established extensive physical protection measures, robust Command and Control structures, comprehensive export controls and an effective regulatory regime to ensure safety and security of nuclear materials and installations.

As of today, a specially trained and skilled force of 25,000 nuclear security officials ensures the security of our nuclear assets. Besides, integrated intelligence component exercises vigil to provide depth in defense.

Pakistan has gained rich experience in the field of nuclear security. We have established a Centre of Excellence that conducts specialized courses in nuclear security, physical protection and personnel reliability. We are ready to share our experiences, best practices and training facilities with other interested states in the region and beyond.

We are currently deploying Radiation Portal Monitors at key exit and entry points to prevent illicit trafficking of radioactive and nuclear materials.

Mr. President,

Pakistan actively works with the international community on nuclear security.

Pakistan is party to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We implement the latest IAEA Guidelines on Nuclear Security; and subscribe to the IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources, and the
IAEA Incident and Trafficking Database (ITDB). Our cooperation in these areas has been most productive.

Mr. President,

Pakistan recognizes the important role played by the IAEA verification regime. We have fully complied with our obligations pursuant to our safeguards agreements with the IAEA. The unanimous approval by the IAEA Board of C-3 and C-4 Safeguards Agreement reflected international community's recognition of Pakistan's expertise in the safe and secure operation of nuclear power plants.

While the implementation of regulatory aspects of the Agency is important in its own right, the promotional activities of the Agency are of the highest priority for the developing nations. Equitable allocation of extra budgetary resources is needed for both the safeguards and the technical cooperation programmes of the Agency.

Pakistan believes in an equitable, non-discriminatory and criteria-based approach to advance the universally shared goals of non-proliferation and promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. We hope that considerations of safety and security would facilitate, not hinder, the pursuit of peaceful uses of nuclear energy for promoting the development agenda, improving human lives and mitigating the adverse impact of climate change.

Thank you, Mr. President.