STATEMENT

by

AMBASSADOR IRENE SUSAN B. NATIVIDAD
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at

the Plenary Debate
on the
Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

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Mr. President,

The Philippines reaffirms our commitment and cooperation to the objectives of the International Atomic Agency (IAEA).

We welcome the Report of the Agency and the balanced manner by which its objectives are being pursued.

The Philippines welcomes the Union of Comoros, the Republic of Djibouti, the Cooperative Republic of Guyana, and the Republic of Vanuatu into the IAEA.

The Philippines believes that the Agency continues to play a vital role in enabling developing countries such as ours to use science and technology for development, as well as in maintaining international peace and security.

As Chair of the Group of 77 and China, Vienna Chapter, the Philippines tabled resolutions on behalf of the Group on strengthening the Agency’s technical cooperation activities, and on strengthening its activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications.

There is no doubt the Philippines has benefitted from our strong partnership with the IAEA. We are grateful for the Agency’s valuable support through our various technical cooperation agreements.

We are pleased to report that the electron beam project, which began in 2009 with funding assistance from both the Agency and the Philippine Government, will be inaugurated in December.

This project will improve industry competitiveness as it will open new applications that will create new products and improve the quality of industrial materials. In our case, the new quarantine treatment against the mango pulp weevil using gamma radiation developed by the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute (PNRI) will enhance the export competitiveness of the Philippine Super Mango.

Our Technetium-99m generator facility, which is also a recipient of technical and financial assistance from the IAEA, received its license to operate and will be ready by December 2014.

The generator production facility is expected to cut the cost of hospital procedures by at least 50 percent, making diagnostic tests more affordable, faster and more accessible to a wider segment of the population.

On providing better access to clean and safe drinking water, the Philippines takes a pioneering role as one of three pilot countries participating in the IAEA Water Availability Enhancement Project or IWAVE. The project aims to enhance national capabilities to assess the availability, quality, and sustainability of water resources.
Mr. President,

The Philippines reiterates its strong commitment to realize the objectives of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) in a comprehensive manner.

We believe that there should be equal progress in all three pillars of the Treaty, namely, nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We look forward to the 2015 NPT Review Conference that would allow us to review and take stock of our progress, and to chart the way forward.

The Philippines strongly supports the establishment of Nuclear Weapon Free Zones as a way to contribute to global peace and security and to the end goal of nuclear disarmament. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) established the Southeast Asian Nuclear Weapon Free Zone for this purpose.

We are committed to continue our dialogue with the Nuclear Weapon States to address concerns over their proposed reservations to the Protocol to the SEANWFZ Treaty. We thus welcome the working level meeting between ASEAN Member States and the NWS at the margins of the First Committee session.

The Philippines looks forward to the NWS’s signing and ratification of the Protocol without reservations.

Next to our region, the Philippines is especially interested in securing lasting peace in the Middle East.

We again call on the convening of a Conference on the establishment of a Middle East Zone Free of Nuclear Weapons and all other Weapons of Mass Destruction before we even convene the 2015 NPT Review Conference.

We believe that the convening of the Conference on the Middle East will provide a positive momentum to the Review Conference.

The Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons are also providing the necessary impetus and we urge all States to participate in these discussions, particularly in the upcoming Conference in Vienna in December.

As we pursue our goal of the total elimination of nuclear weapons, it is equally important to ensure that existing nuclear facilities and materials are safe and secure.

The Philippines supports the IAEA’s work in strengthening the global nuclear safety regime through the efficient and effective implementation of international legal instruments, the development of safety standards, enhancement of national safety infrastructure, coordination of international emergency preparedness and response mechanisms, and the promotion of a nuclear safety culture.

In this regard, the Philippines co-sponsored the resolution, “Measures to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear, radiation, transport and waste safety”.
On nuclear safety, the Philippines supports the continued implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety and welcome progress made in its implementation with the full cooperation of Member States especially in the safety assessment worldwide.

We are specifically pleased with the progress made in the safety assessment of nuclear power plants, the conduct of IAEA’s peer review services, and emergency preparedness and response.

As our contribution in this field, the Philippines will host a National Workshop on Nuclear Security Information Management System from 25 to 26 November.

My country also looks forward to the conduct of an Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan review meeting in Manila at the end of this month which will focus on the Agency’s assistance in the establishment of the National Nuclear Security Support Centre.

The Philippines is also requesting for an International Nuclear Security Advisory Service (INSServ) mission focusing on nuclear security at a major public event to assist the government prepare for the APEC Heads of States Meeting in the Philippines in late 2015.

Our achievements in the various aspects of nuclear security would not have been possible without the support of IAEA, our Partner States, the EU, and other organizations.

Our commitment to strengthening nuclear security stems from the recognition that nuclear security, along with nuclear safety, is integral to the continued development and enjoyment of the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

On nuclear safeguards, the Philippines joined over 60 Member States in co-sponsoring the resolution on the “Implementation of the NPT safeguards agreement between the Agency and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea” which calls upon the DPRK to refrain from conducting further nuclear tests pursuant to relevant Security Council resolutions.

Mr. President,

On a final note, the Philippines is keen on pursuing stronger partnership and cooperation with the IAEA in the coming years.

Thank you.