

Statement
by
H.E. Dr. Suriya Chindawongse,
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
of Thailand to the United Nations,
at the International Ministerial Conference on
Nuclear Power in the 21st Century
26-28 October 2022, Washington, D.C.

President of the Conference,
Excellencies and Participants,

1. On behalf of the delegation of Thailand, I wish to extend my warmest appreciation to the IAEA, the International Energy Agency (IEA), the Nuclear Energy Agency of the OECD, and the Government of the United States, for co-organizing and hosting this International Ministerial Conference. I wish to begin by congratulating the Secretary of Energy, as President of this Ministerial Conference.

Madam President,

2. The inalienable right of States to develop, research, produce and use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is protected under the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons. Thailand has been utilizing nuclear energy and radiation for peaceful applications in many areas for more than sixty years. During the tough times of the COVID-19 pandemic, the X-ray imaging technique plays an important role in supporting the diagnosis, grading the severity of disease, guiding treatment, and evaluating the response to treatment. Nuclear and radiation technologies have significantly contributed to our economic prosperity and social well-being -- *among other things*, to fight cancer, to stop hunger, to provide clean water -- to save lives. Nuclear energy and technologies, as a low carbon

emissions energy resource, can significantly contribute to the fulfillment of the SDGs and help address the climate change challenge, in line with the 2015 Paris Agreement adopted under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Madam President,

3. Climate change is real. Its impacts are global in scope and unprecedented in scale. While Thailand's greenhouse gas emissions represent less than 1 per cent of global emissions and are lower than the world average, tackling the global climate crisis is a high priority for our country. Thailand aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050 and net zero greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2065 and we intend to submit our second updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) and revised Long Term Low Emission Development Strategy (LT-LEDS) in line with these targets and the Paris Agreement adopted under the UNFCCC, at the COP27 at Sharm El-Sheikh this year. As the energy sector has been the largest contributor to Thailand's GHG emissions, ambitious energy targets have been put forward in our various national energy plans.

4. Thailand recognizes the benefit of nuclear power as an alternative energy base resource for electricity production. Nuclear power was introduced in Power Development Plan (PDP) since 2007. Later on, PDP 2018 adjusted the ratio of gas, coal and oil, and replaced the nuclear power program with renewable energy resources such as solar, wind, waste to energy, and hydropower. Nuclear power is still acknowledged as a future energy resource option in order to meet increases in the demand and comply with the policy on greenhouse gas emission reduction. The important question is: how do we gain public acceptance and trust of nuclear power after several incidents in the past?

5. In order to gain such acceptance and trust, it is crucial that we governments, together with relevant international

organisations, civil societies and scientists, work together to maintain the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards. On Thailand's part, we continue to develop the necessary infrastructure for present and future nuclear and radiation utilizations. There is enhanced regional cooperation under ASEANTOM which Thailand initiated. Research and development have been conducted in several areas. Relevant agencies have been working towards strengthening our legal and regulatory framework and human resources preparation, as well as carrying out stakeholder involvement activities. Several research programs involving advanced reactors, small modular reactors, fusion and plasma, as well as applications of nuclear and radiation technologies to support the Bio-Circular-Green economy model -- a new economic model which employs technology and innovation for inclusive and sustainable growth -- have been conducted by major institutions of the country. It is expected to enhance and strengthen our capacity for innovation and transformation, including nuclear energy in the future.

Madam President,

6. I believe that this Ministerial Conference will provide a platform for participants from all sectors to engage in a meaningful dialogue on the roles of nuclear power and the advancement of nuclear technologies to mitigate climate change and promote sustainable development, as well as how to ensure that the highest standards of safety, security and safeguards are met. I wish to assure you of the delegation of Thailand's full support for this Conference.

Thank you.
