

61st General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Statement Delivered by H. E. Prakash Kumar Suvedi
Resident Representative and the Leader of the Nepali Delegation
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Madame President,

My delegation joins me in congratulating Her Excellency Maria Zeneida Angara COLLINSON on her election to the chair of the 61st General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency. Her long and illustrious career as a diplomat and her skills and sagacity make her the most appropriate person in this important role.

I would also like to pay tributes to Ambassador Dato Adnan BIN OTHMAN for wisely guiding our deliberations during the 60th General Conference.

May I also take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Yukia Amano on his re-appointment to the post of the Director General of the IAEA. Under his dynamic leadership, the Agency has made many achievements. Under his leadership, IAEA promptly responded to our request to support in complementing our national efforts of reconstruction after the 2015 earthquakes by assisting us in verifying the integrity of key infrastructures and cultural heritage sites. Mr. Amano visited my country Nepal earlier this year. His visited has put a positive imprint and has accorded new momentum to the fruitful cooperation Nepal is having with the IAEA. While assuring full

support of the Government of Nepal in the discharge of his duties, I wish for the success of his next tenure.

Madame President

Nepal is guided by its pursuit of peace and progress for itself and for all. Therefore, the fundamental tenet of IAEA, atom for peace and development, reflects our own principles and aspirations. Nepal has always firmly upheld the beliefs that facilitating the peaceful nuclear activities and furthering the research and development of this vital technology is in the common interest of mankind. However, it is also true that applications of atomic energy for peaceful purposes could only be attained if pursued within a widely recognized framework. The safeguards system of IAEA is the framework that can effectively channelize the achievements in the nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes.

It is with this firm conviction, Nepal, which is among the original signatories to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, signed with the IAEA an AGREEMENT FOR THE APPLICATION OF SAFEGUARDS IN CONNECTION WITH THE TREATY ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS in 1972. Nevertheless, Nepal's active involvement with the IAEA came rather late. Nepal became a member of the Agency only in 2008 and joined its Technical Assistance programme in 2012. As a logical development of that process, Nepal established its residential Mission in Vienna late last year.

Madame President

Only a robust regulatory framework at the national levels can ensure better nuclear security and safety at the global level. We, therefore, have given utmost priority to the task of the establishment of a regulatory framework in the field of nuclear technology. As the first step, the Nuclear Law was drafted and circulated among various national stakeholders. With substantive feedbacks from those stakeholders, it is now in the process of being submitted for approval.

Since signing of the Revised Supplementary Agreement Concerning the Provision of Technical Assistance by the IAEA and Fifth Agreement to Extend the 1987 Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA) both in 2012, Nepal has been receiving valuable supports for its capacity building through different projects such as such as National Infrastructure for Radiation Safety, Developing Radiation Health Service infrastructure, Animal Productivity and trans-boundary Diseases, Improving Crop Yield for food Security, Education in Nuclear Physics and Chemistry, Non-Destructive Testing and so on. Thus, Nepal currently, is participating in 31 different projects under the IAEA.

The above-mentioned projects have provided capacity building opportunities trainings through meetings and workshops, fellowships and scientific visits to Nepali professionals in their respective fields. The projects have also provided equipment and accessories to some leading academic and scientific institutions in Nepal aimed at developing capability of these institutions. In addition, IAEA has deployed several Expert Missions to Nepal to address the particular issues under the project framework related to Nuclear

Science and Technology. Apart from the regular projects, the agency has also provided extra trainings/workshops/meetings to Nepali professionals in the field of Nuclear Science and Technology.

With the implementation of the projects, Nuclear Medicine Services has been strengthened and expanded. Diagnosis and treatment of cancer disease has become more effective and affordable to the poor. Animal Productivity has been increased and trans-boundary diseases have been controlled to some extent.

In fact, Technical Cooperation plays central role in the development of the application of atomic energy for peaceful purposes in the countries like ours that are lagging behind in the field of nuclear science and technology. IAEA Technical Cooperation equally plays significant role in helping the countries like Nepal in attaining Sustainable Development Goals in various fields. Moreover, the human resource development promoted through the Technical Cooperation is also directly linked with the capacity of the countries like ours to verifiably and comprehensively comply with the safeguard regime. Therefore, we would like to call upon all member states to put their efforts to further strengthen the Technical Cooperation programme of the IAEA. We would like to go from this Conference fully assured that the IAEA's capacities in regard to Technical Cooperation will continue to be strengthened.

Madame President

I would like to reiterate that safeguards and global non-proliferation regime are fundamentals to realize the goals of atom for peace and development. While there is a wide adherence to these principles, the

Democratic People's Republic of Korea has time and again flouted them. We regret nuclear tests carried out by the DPRK despite the repeated calls of the UN Security Council and international community. Nepal views that such acts would be detrimental to the international nuclear non-proliferation efforts as well as the peace, and stability on the Korean peninsula. In line with her consistent policy of general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction, Nepal stands against such tests. Nepal appeals the DPRK to come back to the NPT framework and open itself for the Agency's verification regime.

I look forward to fruitful discussions during this General Conference.

Thank you!