

62nd General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency
Statement Delivered by
Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Leader of the Nepali Delegation
Honourable Mr. Pradeep Kumar Gyawali
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Madame President
Madame Acting Director General
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen

I begin by congratulating you, Madame President, on your election to the chair of this General Conference. I assure you of my delegation's full support.

Madame President,

Nepal's abiding faith in multilateralism emanates from our deep commitment to the principles and purposes of the UN Charter, the values of *Panchasheela*, and the norms of world peace. We consider that only through dialogues, negotiations and engagements in multilateral setting, the world community can address the global challenges that we in isolation cannot. As the world becomes increasingly complex, the problems we face become equally intractable. This is where the value of multilateralism, collaboration and cooperation among the sovereign States appears critical to build synergy, muster strength and confront the challenges collectively.

Nepal considers that all three pillars of the United Nations- peace and security, human rights and development- should receive equal emphasis. We believe that advancement in science and technology should contribute to the strengthening of the development pillar of the United Nations.

Almost three years have passed since the UN General Assembly adopted the Agenda 2030 for sustainable development with a commitment to leaving no one behind. This is a fitting time that we deliberate in this important forum how the nuclear science and technology can be beneficially utilized for attaining SDGs. I am glad to note that IAEA has calibrated its activities to facilitate this process and help achieve the goals related to health, clean water, agriculture, nutrition, food security, climate action and access to energy for all. These are critical areas for reducing poverty, sustaining progress and enhancing benefit of technological advancement for humanity. Indeed, with its fundamental tenet "atom for peace and development" IAEA had always captured the very essence of this idea.

Madame President,

We deeply value our membership and partnership with IAEA. Though use of nuclear science and technology is still very limited in Nepal, our joining as a Member State of IAEA in 2008 has broadened our understanding of application of nuclear technology and its utility for socio-economic development. Important innovations in medicine, energy and other industrial

applications have been developed through the use of nuclear technology. Countries like ours need technical support for properly utilizing nuclear science and technology for development, building capacity, complying with the safeguard regime and ensuring safety and security of nuclear and radioactive materials.

Since the signing of RSA¹ Concerning the Provision of Technical Assistance and the Fifth Agreement to Extend the 1987 RCA² for Research, Development and Training in 2012, Nepal has become beneficiary of IAEA's technical cooperation. The area of technical cooperation includes building of national infrastructure for radiation safety, developing radiation health service infrastructure, increasing animal productivity and trans-boundary diseases control, improving crop yield for food security, education in nuclear physics and chemistry, and non-destructive testing among others.

We have seen good results of the projects in the application of nuclear science and technology for peaceful purposes. Nuclear medicine services have been strengthened and expanded in Nepal. Diagnosis and treatment of cancer disease has become more effective and affordable to the needy and poor. The cooperation has helped capacity building of Nepali technical experts as well as institutional capacity building of some academic and scientific institutions. Now we are engaging with IAEA to prioritize national programs and projects with a view to sustain the achievements and help implementing SGDs. Last year we had the pleasure to host the Director General of IAEA Mr. Yukiya Amano on visit to Nepal.

Nuclear science and technology should be used only for the peaceful purposes within recognized safeguard framework of IAEA. To give it an effect, in 1972, we signed the Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement with IAEA. Ever since, we have not only adhered to the Treaty provisions but also stood for stringent safeguards measures and IAEA verifications. Nepal has introduced Nuclear Materials Regulatory Directives and has adopted National Nuclear Policy. We are in the process of enacting separate nuclear law to create a sound regulatory framework within the country. We believe that only a robust regulatory framework at the national levels can ensure better nuclear security and safety at the global level.

Madame President,

Nepal strongly believes that the international community, while complying to such frameworks prescribed for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology, should equally espouse the principles of general and complete disarmament of all weapons of mass destruction particularly the chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear weapons. We believe that resources of armaments should be diverted to peace and development. We consider that sustainable peace can be achieved only through dialogues and collaboration, not through armaments. We believe in utilizing science and technology for creating new and fair development opportunities for all.

To confirm this belief, Nepal was one of the original signatories of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which we ratified in 1970. We are a signatory to the

¹ Revised Supplementary Agreement

² Regional Cooperative Agreement

Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. Last year we supported the adoption of the Nuclear Weapons Prohibition Treaty and later we signed it. Ratification process of both of these treaties is being initiated with due priority. We are a State party to the Chemical Weapons Convention and Biological Weapons Convention. We strongly support UN Security Council resolution 1540 and remain fully committed to its implementation. These international regimes not only compliment but also support and sustain the momentum towards non-proliferation and nuclear disarmament with NPT as its cornerstone.

Madame President,

Before I conclude, allow me to briefly update about the uniquely successful peace process through which Nepal transitioned to a state of democratic peace and stability. In the process we concluded a decade long armed conflict peacefully, managed arms and armed combatants and integrated them into the society, restructured the State, empowered women and hitherto marginalized communities, managed diversity and adopted democratic constitution through an inclusive and democratically elected Constituent Assembly and formed stable governments in all three tiers of federal structures through democratic elections. It was a home-grown, nationally led process owned and supported by our people. The peace process has established a culture of dialogue, accommodation, and mutual respect among the stakeholders within the country.

To sustain the political gains and building on the democratic foundation that has been created, we are now focused on attaining economic development with a vision of 'Prosperous Nepal and Happy Nepali'. This vision is closely aligned with SDGs, and we intend to implement this through promoting investment, propelling economic growth, creating job, maintaining stability, and ensuring social justice, good governance and rule of law.

Excellencies,

In today's globalized world, no country can walk alone in the pursuit of development and prosperity. Only through partnership, cooperation and collaboration we can collectively reach to that destination. Nepal is keen to forge that partnership for collective prosperity.

I thank you for your attention.

