

STATEMENT OF THE PHILIPPINES
by
H.E. AMBASSADOR MARIA CLEOFE R. NATIVIDAD
62nd Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference

At the outset, I warmly congratulate you again, Madam President, on your election. I fully trust that you will steer this Conference towards its successful conclusion.

Madame President,

We commend the commitment and dedication of Director General Yukiya Amano to strengthen the IAEA, and wish him speedy recovery. While we miss the presence of the Director General, the Secretariat is in good hands with Acting Director General Mary Alice Hayward at the helm.

It is inspiring to see distinguished women occupying the podium of this august chamber. We hope that the thrust of the Secretariat in promoting gender parity would be further sustained. We also look forward to seeing a more balanced representation of developing countries in the Secretariat in its senior and policy-making levels.

Madam President,

This Conference continues to pursue the Agency's mandates, especially in light of emerging challenges in the achievement of national development goals.

The growing demand for the Agency's assistance under the Technical Cooperation Programme requires to be matched with sufficient, adequate, and predictable resources. Balance needs to be ensured in the allocation for the Agency's promotional and non-promotional activities.

My delegation looks forward to the Ministerial Conference on "Nuclear Science and Technology" to be held in Vienna this November and thank Japan and Costa Rica for their hard work in organizing the conference.

Madam President,

My delegation acknowledges the comprehensive update on the Agency's activities in nuclear applications.

We fully support the application of the sterile insect technique (SIT) in eradicating dengue-carrying mosquitoes. We welcome initiatives to address human health issues, including Alzheimer's disease and cancer.

The Agency's collaboration with the Food and Agriculture Organization and the World Health Organization has to be further enriched. Other partnerships may also be explored in the future.

We commend the Agency for the progress made in the Renovation of the Agency's Nuclear Application Laboratories (ReNuAL). We hope more that more Member States could support this initiative.

To address the negative effects of climate change on our food supply, the Philippines, through the Philippine Nuclear Research Institute, is about to roll-out a nuclear-inspired technology to make rice plants more resistant to typhoons.

Recently, northern Philippines was ravaged by *Super-typhoon Mangkhut*, affecting hundreds of thousands of people and leaving billions of pesos in agricultural damage. Climate change affects us all.

Thus, we welcome this year's Scientific Forum's theme of "Nuclear Technology for Climate: Mitigation, Monitoring and Adaptation." We are pleased that IAEA invited a young Filipino student and budding scientist, Hillary Diane Andales, to address the opening session. She spoke on effective communication about the urgency of addressing climate change.

Madam President,

Concerns regarding nuclear security and safety continue to underscore the Agency's relevance. Constructive deliberations on these matters remain essential.

The Philippines' Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan has been reviewed and updated during the IAEA's mission last April. We received the advice to put in place the Nuclear Security Support Center this July.

Our country has implemented the integrated safeguards in 2017 where both the comprehensive safeguards and additional protocol are in force.

Madam President,

Recent events relating to Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and the further development of the DPRK's nuclear program underscore the Agency's critical work on safeguards.

Echoing the Joint Communiqué issued by the ASEAN Foreign Ministers last August, we welcome recent dialogues among concerned parties, in the hope that it would lead towards the complete, verifiable, and irreversible denuclearization of the Korean Peninsula in peaceful manner.

We commend Singapore for shepherding during its Chairmanship ASEAN's efforts to strengthen its links with the IAEA and for organizing an exhibit on ASEAN Network for Regulatory Bodies on Atomic Energy (ASEAN TOM) at the sidelines of this Conference.

Along this line, the international nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, with the NPT as its cornerstone, has to be further enhanced. Hence, we welcome the growing number of States supporting the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, which complements and strengthens the NPT.

Madam President,

2018 marks the 60th year of the Philippines' participation in the IAEA. This longstanding partnership has produced significant milestones in the advancement of nuclear science in our country.

Last February, Director General Amano held a successful visit to the Philippines, with the primary objective of identifying needs and generating ideas on building national capacities. The Director General's commitment was underscored by the signing of an MOU between our Departments of Science and Technology and of Education on the use of nuclear science and technology curriculum exemplars for high school students, developed through a regional TC project.

In May 2018, a high-level Philippine delegation led by the Senate President visited the IAEA and the Seibersdorf Laboratories. This helped deepen our legislators understanding of the legal and practical aspects of Philippine-IAEA cooperation. On this note, we thank the Agency for helping raise awareness on the implementation of relevant instruments through national legislation.

Next month, the Philippines is honored to host the “Regional Workshop on Self-Assessment of Emergency Preparedness and Response Arrangements against the IAEA Safety Standards”. We look forward to the full participation of relevant Member States.

The Philippines has submitted the Self Evaluation Report (SER) to the Agency, and is closely collaborating with it for the Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) Mission this year. These will complement our proposed National Policy for a Nuclear Power Program, developed under our Department of Energy.

Against this backdrop, the Philippines reaffirms its commitment to the vision and goals of the Agency and reassures colleagues of its full support and positive engagement.

Thank you, Madam President.