



59th IAEA General Conference

Statement by Ecuador

Wilson Pastor Morris
Permanent Representative of Ecuador

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Mr. President,

On behalf of the Republic of Ecuador, allow me to congratulate you, Ambassador Filippo Formica, for having been elected President of the fifty-ninth session of the General Conference of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and to reiterate the support and the friendship of this delegation.

I would also like to extend my gratitude to the Director General, Ambassador Yukiya Amano, and the entire team of the Secretariat, for preparing the reports and the presentations that have been held on the issues that bring us together.

My delegation would also like to extend a cordial welcome to Barbados and to Antigua and Barbuda as new members of the Agency. We are particularly pleased to see two fraternal countries of our region joining the IAEA.

Mr. President,

For Ecuador, the peaceful applications of nuclear energy are particularly important due to their contribution to the development of very relevant sectors such as health, agriculture or industry. We are convinced that this technology will play a fundamental role in the implementation and the success of the post-2015 Development Agenda, which our Heads of Government are preparing to adopt next week during the Sustainable Development Summit.

The Agency has to rise to the challenge and - to that effect - it is essential to ensure the strengthening of all activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications as well as the Technical Cooperation Programme.

Ecuador would like to highlight the essential role of the Technical Cooperation Programme in order to reach one of the central goals of the Agency's statute, which is the promotion of the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Therefore, we recognize the efforts which have been made to ensure a more efficient program that responds to the priorities and needs outlined by the Member States.

In this regard, we would like to emphasize that the program of technical cooperation with Latin American and Caribbean countries again recorded the highest implementation rate regarding other regions. This demonstrates the relevance of these activities for the region and the interest of these countries in the implementation of joint activities with the IAEA.

And it is particularly in this context that ARCAL has played a fundamental role by ensuring active cooperation with the Agency in various aspects. We are sure that the implementation of the Regional Strategic Profile, which defines and prioritizes the areas of cooperation for the period 2016-2017, will contribute to increasing the formulation of projects that will have an important impact on the lives of our citizens.

Mister President,

Ecuador, within its process of legal and institutional reforms, has made progress regarding the draft of the new Atomic Energy Act, which will allow it to be in coherence with the principal areas of the IAEA's work as well as with the new basic security standards adopted at an international level.

In cooperation with the IAEA, the draft of the Act is being adjusted and will be the subject of one of the Agency's projects in November focused on debating all observations before its adoption procedure at the General Assembly. Additionally, the Under Secretary of Nuclear Control and Applications as part of the Ministry of Electricity and Renewable Energy is implementing a review process of the technical standard which involves backup services for the regulating authority such as: radioactive waste management, personal dosimetry, calibration of detectors, monitoring of radioactive environments and other nuclear-related applications.

Furthermore, qualitative systems are being implemented at the level of the regulating authority and reengineering in order to improve inspections through staff training and a national program for the automation of services to go hand in hand with governmental policies.

The National Government has prioritized the enhancement of all laboratories providing support to the regulating authority. Now my country intends to promote a project for the construction of new modern laboratories for nuclear applications. This constitutes a significant advance for the country and we are counting in advance on the cooperation of the Agency to provide the appropriate technology and the relevant training.

My country further wants to deepen the cooperation regarding agriculture and food safety, and in that sense, aspires to strengthen the incorporation of technologies in order to improve productivity in agriculture and the development of sensitive products, as well as the development of irradiation to increase and simplify the exportation of Ecuadorian products to more distant markets.

Mr. President,

The Constitution of Ecuador proclaims peace, universal disarmament and condemns the development and the use of weapons of mass destruction. My country, underpinning its

own conviction and recalling the Advisory Opinion of the International Court of Justice, reaffirms that the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons constitutes a crime against humanity and a threat to our collective security.

This permanent proclamation of the Ecuadorian foreign policy was concretely expressed through the active participation of Ecuador in the Treaty of Tlatelolco and the creation of the first densely populated nuclear-weapon-free zone. We therefore take pride on the formal proclamation of Latin America and the Caribbean as a "Zone of Peace" during the Second CELAC Summit held in La Havana, Cuba, on January 29, 2014.

These actions have given us the legitimacy to raise our voices and reiterate that the only effective guarantee against the use or the threat of use of nuclear weapons is their total elimination and prohibition. As it has been declared by the Heads of Government of CELAC, we uphold our firm position in favor of the complete implementation of the three pillars of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), without discrimination or double standards, and we reiterate our concern, because while the objectives of the Treaty in the matter of non-proliferation and of exercising the alienable right of a peaceful use of nuclear energy have been implemented, the objectives of nuclear disarmament have not yet registered progress.

Therefore, we regret that - in spite of all the efforts taken by the majority of the delegations - only a small group of countries has prevented us from reaching an agreement in the Final Document of the 2015 Review Conference, adding uncertainty to the agenda of total disarmament and to the situation in the Middle East.

In this regard, we consider the efficient application of the safeguards of the IAEA in the Middle East to contribute to generating confidence among the States of the region and to represent a necessary step towards the establishment of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. We therefore encourage the Agency to exercise its statutory function of "...acting in conformity with UN policies destined to achieve global disarmament".

The members of CELAC have expressed their grave concerns about the humanitarian consequences of enormous proportions and the global effects of any accidental or intentional nuclear detonation and they consider that this topic should be addressed during every discussion on the issue of nuclear weapons. We therefore reiterate our support to the appeal made in Vienna and Nayarit to initiate a diplomatic process of negotiation of an international legally binding instrument for the prohibition of nuclear weapons.

Mr. President,

The recent negotiation process of the CTBT Article XIV Declaration has proven the growing concern of non-nuclear-weapon countries about reflecting the timeliness of the debate on non-proliferation and disarmament. But it has also left us with a bittersweet taste when recognizing that not all delegations are committed to the core of the Treaty, which is, by definition, its conversion into an efficient instrument in order to stop modernization and development of new nuclear weapons.

It has also demonstrated the continuing presence of nuclear weapons in the strategic doctrines and the security policies of nuclear-weapon States.

The 20th anniversary of the opening for signature of the CTBT is approaching, which is why we need to refocus our efforts towards the main objective of the Treaty, its contribution to nuclear disarmament. The promotion of the Treaty's coming into force should therefore begin with ensuring that it is perceived as a credible and significant tool.

Mister President,

We have received with great satisfaction the conclusion of the agreement between the group E3/UE+3 and the Islamic Republic of Iran, through the establishment of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), whose full application will enable Iran to develop a nuclear program of exclusively peaceful nature.

As a strong advocate of the peaceful use of nuclear energy, Ecuador has always recognized the right of every State to develop activities in this field within the framework of the NPT.

This agreement constitutes a key milestone, not only because of the fact that a large controversy has been settled by negotiation, but also fundamentally due to the fact that dialogue prevailed over unilateralism, reaffirming the efficiency of diplomacy when searching for lasting peace.

My country also wishes to applaud the signing of the roadmap for the clarification of all pending issues, past and present, regarding the nuclear program of Iran, which will boost and strengthen the cooperation with the Agency in order to resolve all pending issues by the end of 2015.

Ecuador has confidence in the essential and independent work of the Agency to verify compliance with the safeguards and the full application of the JCPOA. We are absolutely certain that the IAEA's experience and its staff training are the best guarantee for the success of this endeavor.

The commitment and the determination of all actors have been fundamental in this process. Therefore, we want to congratulate the Islamic Republic of Iran for persisting in its undertaking in spite of the numerous challenges for its country. At the end, the full implementation of all agreements will have a major impact on people's lives, or better yet, multilateralism can make a difference in the day to day lives of all citizens and we truly need that.

In conclusion, I would like to reaffirm the commitment of Ecuador with the IAEA and the international community, so that nuclear energy is increasingly safe, efficient and beneficial to mankind.

Thank you.