

Statement by
H.E. Mrs. Ioanna Malliotis
Ambassador Designate of the Republic of Cyprus to Japan
at the Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety
Fukushima, Japan, 15-17.12.2012"

Distinguished Co-Presidents of the Conference
Distinguished Ministers
Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency
Director General of the United Nations Office at Geneva,
Secretary General of the Conference on Disarmament
Delegates
Ladies and Gentlemen

At the outset, allow me express the appreciation of the Government of the Republic of Cyprus to the Japanese Government and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in co-organising this Conference. The decision to hold this event in Fukushima is, indeed, very appropriate and symbolic.

Cyprus wishes, as well, to take this opportunity to extend, once more, its sincere condolences and express its solidarity and support to the Government and the people of Japan, for the lives lost and the pain and damages they suffered as a result of the 11th of March 2011 tsunami and subsequent events, as well of those damages of last week's earthquake, which hit again this area.

Unfortunately, once again, radiation leaks, from the Fukushima-Daiichi accident, has proven that radiation contamination is not contained within one country's borders. In fact it does not know borders. Health, social, environmental and economic ramifications of such a major disaster are of universal nature. That is why the matter of nuclear safety must be considered as an issue of global concern. In this context, Cyprus underlines the need to enhance communication regarding nuclear issues at international level with a view to achieve transparency regarding countries' nuclear plans and projects.

It is to be noted that the European Council invited on the 25th of March 2011 the European Commission and all European nuclear safety authorities to carry out comprehensive safety and risk assessment of nuclear power plants at extreme conditions with a high degree of transparency, the so-called 'Stress Tests'. These assessments have now been successfully completed in all EU countries, as well as in some countries in the neighbourhood, operating or planning to construct nuclear power plants.

Cyprus believes that all countries operating nuclear power plants should carry out similar assessments as soon as possible and make every effort in order to improve nuclear safety in their own installations and worldwide.

At the same time, Cyprus is of the opinion that the IAEA can play a key role in involving and supporting all countries, worldwide, towards this goal. In light of the Fukushima-Daiichi accident, The Stress Tests carried out in the EU are examples for concrete global action for nuclear safety and security.

The Republic of Cyprus does not operate nuclear power plants and is not intending to use nuclear energy for generating electricity in the foreseeable future. Cyprus is, however, extremely interested in the improvement of nuclear safety standards, and supports all initiatives aiming at this goal, both within the EU and worldwide. At the same time, Cyprus encourages the use of renewable energy sources as an alternative, green and sustainable option.

Cyprus expresses its deep concern over the nuclear programmes of some countries and in particular of neighbouring countries's plans to construct nuclear power plants at earthquake-prone areas.

Furthermore, Cyprus strongly encourages close engagement between all stakeholders. For this, international cooperation will remain essential to ensure safe operation of nuclear installations and coordination of the different actors, resulting in the best use of available resources.

In concluding, I would like to reiterate, once again, my warm congratulations to the organisers for their initiative to hold this conference on Nuclear Safety, a subject of great importance to all of us, and welcome an open and fruitful discussion among the participants.

Thank you.