

## PHILIPPINES

### Statement Fukushima Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety 15-17 December 2012

Messrs. President, Distinguished Delegates,

The Philippines would like to congratulate the two Co-Presidents, HE Mr Kōichirō Gamba, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan, and HE Mr Fadillah bin Haji Yusof, Deputy-Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation of Malaysia, for successfully convening this Conference. We are confident of achieving a successful outcome under your able leadership.

I also wish to thank and commend the IAEA Director General and the Secretariat for their dedication and hard work in the area of nuclear safety, and for all their efforts in response to the Fukushima nuclear accident.

Messrs. President,

This Conference is a symbolic gesture of the world community to commiserate with the Fukushima residents who bore the brunt of the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power station accident brought about by the devastating earthquake and tsunami on 11 March 2011.

The Philippines commends the Government of Japan for its determination to leave no stone unturned for recovery and reconstruction of the areas affected and more importantly, the people affected by the accident. By organizing this Conference, the Japanese Government is committed to full transparency in sharing information and lessons learned from the accident thereby strengthening nuclear safety worldwide.

The involvement of the IAEA in co-sponsoring this Conference underscores the important role the IAEA must play in strengthening the global nuclear safety framework and in promoting international cooperation in nuclear safety. Confidence in the use of nuclear energy hinges on the continuous improvement and strengthening of nuclear safety. The Philippines places great importance on the Agency's programs on this issue, in particular, its support in ensuring the effective and efficient implementation of international legal instruments, in developing safety standards, in enhancing national safety infrastructures, in coordinating international emergency preparedness and response mechanisms and in promoting a nuclear safety culture worldwide.

The role of the IAEA in nuclear safety is strongly supported by the Member States with their unanimous endorsement of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety at the IAEA General Conference in September 2011. We are pleased to acknowledge the significant progress made in key areas of nuclear safety such as safety assessment of nuclear power plants, the conduct of IAEA's peer review services, emergency preparedness and response, and the IAEA safety standards.

Today, Asia can be considered to be the most actively engaged region in nuclear power. The nuclear power states are enhancing their nuclear programs while newcomer States are seriously considering nuclear power as part of their energy mix.

While the Philippines does not have a nuclear power plant in operation, Filipinos live in a nuclear neighborhood, where to the north and northeast, Taiwan-China, Japan and South Korea and to the west, China, are presently operating a cumulative total of about 40 operating nuclear power plants. If the remaining 48 nuclear power plants presently under shut down in Japan would be given approval to resume operation, then the total number of operating nuclear power plants in this part of Asia would rise to 88. Undoubtedly, enhanced capability on emergency preparedness and response by all countries in the region, and for that matter, worldwide, would benefit people and the environment.



What happened in Fukushima can take place in any of the countries along the ring of fire in Asia and the Pacific. As shown by the Fukushima and Chernobyl nuclear accidents, we cannot be complacent about nuclear safety. A single nuclear incident or accident may have tremendous global or regional consequences not just to people, property and the environment, but also to the future of nuclear energy. Thus, the Philippines places great emphasis on international efforts to strengthen nuclear safety worldwide.

Messrs. President,

From the topics being covered by the Conference, the Philippines recognizes the efforts of the international community to now expand the areas for discussion to include the effects of the nuclear accident on people and the environment, remediation-related activities and R&D for off-site activities. The scientific community has more data now to base dose assessment studies and formulate conclusions and recommendations on protection of the people and the environment against ionizing radiation.

The Philippines anticipates fruitful discussions in the working sessions, and a strong commitment from the decision-makers to work for the strengthening of the global nuclear safety framework, a strong emergency preparedness and response network, and radiation protection of people and the environment against ionizing radiation.

The Philippines also stresses that States that are embarking on nuclear power programs should commit to create an appropriate nuclear safety infrastructure based on the IAEA Safety Standards. We call on the Agency to continue to provide assistance, including through the Technical Cooperation Program, in ensuring the safe and secure use of nuclear technologies. We underscore the important role of the Agency in assisting States in establishing the appropriate regulatory frameworks as well as promote the adoption and implementation of relevant conventions and the IAEA Safety Standards through the Legislative Assistance Program and advisory services. As more countries are turning to the Agency for assistance in the development of their national infrastructures for expanding or launching nuclear power programs, we believe that IAEA Member States should enhance their political and financial support for the Agency's programs in this regard.

Human resource development is also a key component for the sustainability of a nuclear program. The Agency should continue to conduct education and training programs and to pursue its regional approach to capacity building through the creation of networks of national capacity building centers.

In this area, the Philippines believes in the importance of knowledge networks and regional cooperation in the area of nuclear safety, especially in light of the trans-boundary effects of a nuclear accident. We support the establishment of the Regulatory Cooperation Forum which is aimed at facilitating the exchange of information and best practices. The Philippines is also an active member of the Asian Nuclear Safety Network, which has been an effective tool for facilitating and enhancing nuclear safety infrastructure development in Member States. The ANSN may be used as a vehicle for channeling the information and lessons learned from the Fukushima accident to States in the region.

Messrs. Presidents,

The Philippines welcomes the fact that IAEA Member States have managed to overcome differences and have come together during the past year in advancing our common objective of strengthening global nuclear safety. In closing, allow me to affirm the commitment of the Philippines to work with other delegations in a spirit of mutual respect and constructive dialogue.

Thank you, Messrs. President.