

Statement by Amb. J. Enkhsaikhan, Governor of Mongolia, on Russian proposal regarding establishing a reserve of Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) for the supply to IAEA Member States

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My delegation has decided to co-sponsor the draft resolution on the establishment by the Russian Federation of a reserve of low enriched uranium to the IAEA for its Member States.

By providing for the establishment of physical stocks of 120 tonnes of LEU in the form of uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) with an enrichment of 2.0 to 4.95 % at the Agency's disposal, the Russian initiative, as provided for in document GOV/2009/76, would help to guarantee nuclear fuel supply to countries with nuclear power programmes that could face a disruption in the supply of LEU for reasons that are neither technical nor commercial. Mongolia believes that the initiative is not only a timely one, but bearing in mind the history of earlier attempts of multiple approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, a long overdue one. Our support for the issue is based on at least the following three reasons. Firstly, it is based on Article IX of the IAEA Statute that allows Member States to make available to the Agency nuclear materials for supply to other Member States. Secondly, the proposal does not entail additional costs for the Agency. Thirdly, it is in line with the IAEA Director-General's proposal to establish an IAEA low enriched uranium bank, and an LEU reserve in Russia under Agency's auspices.

My delegation believes that the issue of assured nuclear fuel supply is acquiring growing importance, as more and more countries, including Mongolia, are considering introducing nuclear energy. We understand that under the Russian proposal a recipient Member State will not be required to give up its right to establish or further develop its own national fuel cycle, nor the right to own nuclear fuel cycle capabilities, or production capacity in the nuclear fuel cycle. The proposal, in our view, deserves a fair consideration on its own merits. However, we would like to make our position clear that this and similar proposals in the field of nuclear fuel supply assurances cannot be used as a means of discouraging and restricting in any other way the inalienable right of the IAEA Member States under the NPT. The inalienable right under Article IV of the NPT to "develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination and in conformity with Articles I and II of the NPT" must remain intact.

Besides these general considerations, our position vis-à-vis the draft resolution has been formulated in light of our evolving cooperation with Russia on uranium exploitation and other areas of cooperation in peaceful nuclear applications. Thus we have already concluded two intergovernmental agreements in this area. We are also working with other countries in peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Having said the above, I would like to note that this proposal could have gained much wider support if there had been more consultations and confidence building among Member States since the proposal had originally been made two years ago.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.