

Statement by Amb. J. Enkhsaikhan of Mongolia
on Agenda item 3: The Annual Report for 2010

Vienna

2011-06-06

Mr. Chairman,

My delegation would like to thank the Director General and the Secretariat for preparing the draft of the Annual Report for 2010 as contained in document GOV/2011/21. We also welcome the Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica for its application to join the Agency.

My delegation associates itself with the statement made by the Group of 77 and China. In my national capacity allow me to make the following remarks.

Mongolia welcomes and supports the Agency's activities in promoting the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and technology, ensuring nuclear safety and security at the global, regional and national levels, and providing assurances that the commitments to use nuclear facilities and materials for peaceful purposes are honored. Judging from the report, the Agency has made further progress in these three basic areas of its activities in 2010. The events in the first half of this year, especially the accident at the Fukushima Daichi NPP clearly demonstrated that though the international community maintained a high level of safety performance in the past, still much more needs to be done to further improve safety and security. Since agenda item 6 will focus on this issue, I shall not dwell on it in this statement.

Mr. Chairman,

It is a pleasure to note that impressive achievements were registered in the use of nuclear energy and technology despite the hardships encountered by the Agency. Despite the Fukushima nuclear accident, it seems that interest in the power application of nuclear energy continues, though with more caution and greater emphasis on safety and security. Of the 60 or so countries that have expressed interest to develop nuclear power, few, it seems, would reconsider their intention since the demands of sustained economic development, the need to reduce poverty and hunger would objectively demand more use of energy and electricity. Hence more attention needs to be paid to safety and security of not only the 441 reactors in operation, but also of the 66 that are under active construction. That implies that member states will continue to rely on the Agency for assistance in capacity building and other areas.

As a country of with uranium resources, Mongolia is interested in cooperating with the Agency and through it with the nuclear powers in making the best use of these resources. As pointed out in the Agency's report, at the 2009 rate of consumption, the projected lifetime of the 5.4 Mt U is around 90, which is far longer than the projected uses of copper, zinc, oil and natural gas. This fact itself demonstrates that the future use of uranium is not a choice but will become a necessity. Hence much research needs to be carried out on the best and economical use of uranium, its by-products and isotopes as well as on the spent nuclear fuel which will be stockpiled even more.

Mr. Chairman,

Mongolia shall make use of its uranium reserves by adding value and within the Agency's accepted norms and rules. At present its priority is survey, exploitation, processing and possible export of value added nuclear material. There are a number of suggestions in this regard. But before taking any definite decision on the matter, it will develop first a comprehensive national framework for uranium mining. Several countries have expressed interest to invest in and cooperate with Mongolia in the exploitation of uranium. We are prepared to work with other countries. However, contrary to some press reports, there is no intention to accept nuclear waste of other countries for whatever lucrative 'service fee' or compensation is offered. What we have in mind at this stage is to explore the possibility in the long run of becoming a provider of a certain type of nuclear fuel for NPPs. Mongolia's goals are modest and will be within the framework of its national legislation, its international commitments and accepted IAEA norms and standards.

My delegation supports the continued interest of the Agency and Member States in the development and application of small and medium sized reactors. With an eye on developing in the long run an NPP, Mongolia pays a particular attention to nuclear power technology developments such as International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO) and international programme on advanced technology such as Generation IV International Forum (GIF). We believe that bearing in mind the Fukushima Daichi NPP accident and lessons learned or to be learned, much needs to be done to improve further the safety and security of present and future plants. The human factor is as important as technical, if not even more. Human error can be as devastating as technical fault. Therefore further effort needs to be made to train and improve the skills of plant operators and other personnel dealing with every stage of the nuclear cycle. My delegation, therefore, welcomes Agency's increased effort to building capacity in Member States.

The parts of the report dealing with application of nuclear technology and technical cooperation show the work done by the Agency in 2010. I shall dwell on these aspects of the Agency's work when the Board takes up the Technical Cooperation report for 2010 as its agenda item 4.

Before concluding I would like to briefly touch upon the issue of financial support of technical cooperation projects. As the Annual report underlines in the section dealing with application of nuclear technology, especially regarding financing some of the PACT projects, the office received some funding through Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) to cover 25 imPACT reviews and PMDS follow-up missions. The U.S. generous pledge of \$ 50 mln. for the PUI is an important asset that some countries, including mine, have benefited by receiving the Agency's imPACT mission in 2010 that allowed Mongolia and the Agency to proceed with the plans to address this increasing challenge to our society. Bearing in mind that the goal of the PIU is to promote greater access to peaceful uses of nuclear energy and that in order to be more effective the initial sum needs to be matched by \$ 100 mln, we would call upon those that can contribute, to do so as soon as possible.

Thank you.