

“Capacity Building Initiative” Visit (14 – 15 April 2015)

Opening remarks – Political Framework

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The Non Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, which takes place in a few weeks in New York, is a milestone for the international disarmament and non-proliferation regime. We wish every success to the Algerian Chair, Ambassador Feroukhi, in this difficult yet exciting task.

As you know, France is committed to a balanced approach towards the three clusters of the Treaty. France has taken initiatives in each area covered by the Treaty: nuclear disarmament, nuclear non-proliferation and nuclear peaceful uses. For instance, in the area of nuclear disarmament, France has just proposed a draft for an ambitious, realistic and verifiable Fissile Material Cut off Treaty. In the field of nuclear non-proliferation, France has taken an active part with its partners from the E3+3 in the negotiations to reach a long-term agreement ensuring the exclusive peaceful nature of the Iranian nuclear program. These are only some examples of our actions to fulfill our obligations under cluster 1 and 2 of the NPT. But as you know, our issue today is about nuclear peaceful uses.

As you know, nuclear energy will continue to play an important role in the world energy mix in the long run. This can be explained by the several benefits attached to nuclear energy. Nuclear power plays a significant role in meeting the increasing demand for electricity in the world, in securing the supply of energy and in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. The development of nuclear energy contributes to the international action against climate change. This is important to remind, only 8 months before the 21st Session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Climate Change, hosted by France, whose objective is to reach an ambitious international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

This visit in Paris, Saclay and Cadarache is a unique opportunity for us to explore how to make the NPT 2015 Review Conference a success for our common objective, that is, extending the benefits of research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes to all States that respect their international obligations.

Since the latest NPT Review Conference in 2010, several trends have influenced international efforts and cooperation in the field of nuclear peaceful applications. We believe that these trends as well as a series of key messages should be reflected in the discussion later this month in New-York.

1/ States have become aware of the necessity to draw all lessons from the Fukushima-Daiichi accidents. IAEA Member States adopted an

ambitious Action Plan in 2011 to strengthen nuclear safety worldwide. States have also engaged in a process to strengthen relevant international conventions, such as the Convention on Nuclear Safety. We strongly believe that NPT Contracting Parties should reaffirm their commitment to promoting the highest safety standards worldwide. The IAEA should be further encouraged to maintain a dynamic and multi-year vision of priorities in the field of nuclear safety after the end of the Action Plan in 2015. States should be encouraged to enhance transparency in the field of nuclear safety, for example by hosting international Peer Review Missions, by publishing their results and by announcing the program of next peer review missions for the following years, three commitments France has taken and uphold. Among IAEA Peer Review Missions, “Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review Missions” (INIR) are of particular interest for States that which to develop a nuclear energy program. Bangladesh, Turkey and Vietnam for example made use of this IAEA service.

2/ Substantive progress has been achieved regarding the objective of establishing a global nuclear liability regime. 56 countries are either party to the Paris Convention or to the Vienna Convention. We welcome Japan’s ratification of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage. Nevertheless, many nuclear power plants are still not covered by a convention on civil liability for nuclear damage. We think that we must continue to progress towards

the universalization of all relevant international conventions on civil liability for nuclear damage. We firmly believe that the revised Paris, Vienna and Brussels conventions as well as the Joint Protocol provide adequate, prompt and non-discriminatory compensation for all potential victims of nuclear accidents.

3/ Over the past years, nuclear security has become a topic of increased international discussions and cooperation, mainly fostered by IAEA activities. Significant success was also achieved in the context of other international fora, in particular of the framework of the Nuclear Security Summit. States should continue their efforts towards universalization of relevant international conventions, such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (ICSANT) and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Nonetheless, strengthening the State's response to the threats of misappropriation of materials for malevolent purposes is not the only issue at stake. Securing radioactive sources is also of utmost importance. The NPT Contracting Parties should reaffirm the importance of securing all vulnerable sources around the world, so that they cannot fall in the hands of terrorists or be accidentally misused.

4/ Member States have continued to benefit from technical cooperation provided by the IAEA in diverse areas, such as agriculture, food, human health, environment and industry. These activities directly contribute to the Millennium Development Goals.

The IAEA is committed to strengthening the efficiency and effectiveness of the Technical Cooperation Fund, which should be welcomed. The constructive approach adopted by the Working Group on Financing the IAEA's activities, co-chaired by France and Kenya in 2014 has identified ways of helping the technical cooperation resources to become sufficient, assured and predictable, while taking into account budgetary constraints faced by Member States. The Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI), whose prolongation after 2015 is of high importance, is also an important contribution to the promotion of nuclear peaceful uses.

The NPT Contracting Parties should highlight the importance of extending the benefits of non-energetic nuclear applications to all States and of further supporting the role of the IAEA in this regard.

5/ All these actions I have just described will miss their objectives if the NPT Contracting Parties do not commit to enhance international cooperation in the field of education and training. In their 2010 Action Plan, States parties to the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) committed to *“encouraging national, bilateral and international efforts to train the necessary skilled workforce needed to develop peaceful uses of nuclear energy.”*

This commitment today remains as relevant as in 2010. National, bilateral and international efforts in the field of human resources are

still highly needed in order to support the responsible development of nuclear energy and other peaceful nuclear applications.

Indeed, nuclear energy will continue to play an important role in the global energy mix in the long run and challenges in capacity building are numerous. Nuclear countries need to ensure the replacement of engineers, technicians and professors who will retire soon. In nuclear countries as well as in so-called “newcomer countries”, we need to strengthen the capacity of universities and research centers to attract students in nuclear curricula and to retain talents in the long run in academic institutions, governmental entities and industries. Newcomers have to plan and establish the appropriate training infrastructure in the necessary timeframe. In this context, States with nuclear power plants, States with no nuclear industry but with nuclear expertise and newcomers should work together to enhance international cooperation in the field of human resources.

In this regard, regional cooperation can be a strategic option to promote training in the field of civil nuclear applications. The National Centre for Nuclear Energy, Science and Technology in Maamoura, Morocco, for example, hosts an IAEA postgraduate education course in radiation safety, waste and transport for students from francophone countries. In the field of human health, the King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Centre in Saudi Arabia, which has developed specific expertise in the area of cancer treatment,

conducts assistance activities in the training of doctors from other countries in the region as an IAEA Collaborative Centre.

I hope that this two-day visit in France will help us illustrate the issues at stake and that it will give us the opportunity to identify solutions to tackle this challenge.