



# **AFGHANISTAN**

**STATEMENT BY  
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(IAEA)**

**AT THE IAEA  
MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR SAFETY**

**VIENNA, AUSTRIA  
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Mr. President,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

My delegation extends its appreciation to Director-General Yukiya Amano and to his team at the IAEA for convening this important conference and wishes the President of the Conference, Ambassador Antonio Guerreiro of Brazil, every success.

The delegation of Afghanistan joins previous speakers in expressing deepest sympathy for and solidarity with the Government and people of Japan in light of the devastating earthquake and tsunami of 11 March 2011, ultimately leading to the severe accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. Our hearts and thoughts are with the victims of this catastrophe and with their families and friends.

The Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant calamity brought us here together with a view to exploring ways and means to reducing probability of similar catastrophic scenarios in the future. The Government of Afghanistan is committed to contribute to this end and appreciates the IAEA's efforts towards global nuclear safety.

Mr. President,

The 1986 accident at Chernobyl which led to a new approach by the IAEA, starting to create a network for examinations, comparative risk assessment, exchange of information, and legally binding instruments, enabled the Agency to provide immediate response to the Fukushima Daiichi accident, including the dispatch of expert teams to Japan.

My delegation commends IAEA's efforts and activities towards information-sharing and capacity-building as well as the continued assistance provided to member states, targeting at increased potentials of nuclear and radiological emergency arrangements. Afghanistan appreciates that global nuclear safety efforts remained at a high level over recent years and supports attempts to further increase international efforts in the future, learning from the events in Japan.

While the vital role of the Agency is undisputed, the central role in maintaining nuclear safety still remains with States utilizing nuclear and radiation techniques and my delegation cannot emphasize enough the indispensable need for applying highest standards of nuclear safety. States utilizing nuclear and radiation techniques, and their national civilian nuclear safety institutions must be fully conscious of their responsibility, should seek close cooperation with independent international safety experts within the established IAEA framework, ensure universal adherence to relevant international instruments on nuclear safety, and pursue promotion of international information sharing and exchange of best practices.

In particular, developing countries in our region and elsewhere, striving towards construction of nuclear installations, should vigilantly observe concomitant necessities affiliated to nuclear safety, and should seek closest collaboration with the IAEA. Both nuclear suppliers and operators must apply highest standards of nuclear safety. My delegation would also like to reiterate the importance of transparency of risk and safety assessments of nuclear installations.

Since the highly complex systems of nuclear installations are not fully failure-proof, countries utilizing nuclear and radiation techniques must also meet highest standards concerning disaster management, including the availability of rapid reaction capacities and existence of secure containment structures. In this context, let me emphasize that the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Department has a defining role in capacity-building, education and training for regulators and operators, including conveyance of highest standards of safety culture.

The Government of Afghanistan is of the view that a tragic event such as the calamity in Japan should encourage the international community to take a huge step forward. Now is the time to critically improve current safety arrangements, to take an approach that includes extreme scenarios, and to consider merging our reflections and actions on nuclear safety and nuclear security. The combined experience and skills of operators and scientists on one side and security personnel on the other side may prove to be a more adequate approach vis-à-vis the highly complex and challenging structures of nuclear technology. Keeping in mind that nuclear and radiological accidents gravely endanger our peoples and environment, it is the responsibility of the countries utilizing these technologies to be prepared for worst disasters. We hope that this Conference marks the start of a continuous process of translating technical assessments into practical action apt to improve global nuclear safety.

Mr. President,

Given the trans-boundary nature of nuclear and radiation accidents, Afghanistan, located in a geological danger zone, is interested in regional cooperation in this area and to expand all measures aimed at enhanced nuclear safety, radiation protection and emergency preparedness.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, I wish to state that the Delegation of Afghanistan appreciates the collaboration between the Government of Japan and the IAEA in fully assessing the accident, as well as the intention of the Government of Japan to organize, in cooperation with the Agency, an international conference on nuclear safety in the second half of 2012. The Government of Afghanistan also supports the five proposals as presented by Director General Amano in his introductory statement to this conference, as well as the planned drafting of an Action Plan on nuclear safety and emergency preparedness and response, and its timely implementation.

Thank you