

IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety

20-24 June 2011

Statement by Denmark

as delivered by Ambassador John Bernhard

Permanent Representative to the IAEA

Mr. President

At the outset let me congratulate you on your election as President of this important Conference and assure you of our full support to your endeavours. I also thank Director General Amano for taking the initiative to convene the Conference in such a timely manner

Let me also join others in extending our condolences to the people and government of Japan on the terrible losses caused by the Great Eastern Japan Earthquake and its aftermath. This Conference is only one example of the international community's resolve jointly to address the consequences of that disaster and to work together to help prevent such tragedies in the future. We thank the Government of Japan for its extensive report on the Fukushima accident transmitted to this Conference.

Mr. President

In Denmark, for our part, we have made the decision that nuclear power should not be included in our own energy mix, as we do not consider it a sustainable form

of energy. However, the Fukushima Daiichi accident has reminded us that the legitimate decision of other countries in favour of nuclear power can have consequences also for their neighbours and the wider regions. This is certainly true in cases of nuclear safety accidents, which can affect people and the environment worldwide. By its very nature, nuclear safety is an issue of obvious international concern and has to be dealt with at an international level. Denmark, therefore, is strongly in favour of the highest nuclear safety standards being implemented worldwide.

Denmark considers that the IAEA is the world's central venue for discussion of and standard setting in nuclear safety, emergency preparedness and response and radiation protection. We support strengthening the IAEA's authority and capacity in these areas. We also emphasize the responsibility of states with nuclear power programmes for ensuring the application of the highest safety standards. We call on them to conduct comprehensive risk and safety assessments of their installations and to make the results publically accessible.

In the aftermath of the Fukushima Daiichi accident we consider it important to strengthen the legal framework for nuclear safety, including in order to reinforce public confidence. The Director General put forward five very salient points in his introductory statement yesterday. We welcome this concrete and realistic contribution and hope the points will be implemented in practice. Several Member States have also put forward ideas in that regard, and the recent Ministerial seminar in Paris brought forth useful proposals. We consider particularly important the suggestions to improve peer review mechanisms, to implement mandatory IAEA safety inspections and to make reports public as well as proposals for

strengthening the Nuclear Safety Convention, inter alia with legally binding IAEA safety standards. We call on all states, particularly those operating or planning to operate nuclear power programmes, to become Contracting Parties to the Nuclear Safety Convention and other relevant legal instruments. Strengthening follow-up to and implementation of recommendations of the Review Meeting of that Convention should be urgently pursued.

Mr. President

We hope that this Conference will lead to a strong commitment on the part of all Member States to enhance the international nuclear safety framework and the role of the IAEA in it. We look forward to a strong and ambitious Action Plan being developed to follow up this Conference and being presented to the Board of Governors and the General Conference in September. Our governments and the public look to the IAEA to take decisive steps in the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi accident. It is important that we live up to our responsibility.

Thank you Mr. President