

STATEMENT BY
THE HONOURABLE SENATOR A. KOHILAN PILLAY
DEPUTY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF MALAYSIA
AT THE IAEA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON NUCLEAR SAFETY
21 JUNE 2011

Mr. President,

1. On behalf of the Malaysian delegation, please accept my heartiest congratulations on your election as the President of the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety. I particularly value the efforts of the Director General of the IAEA, Mr. Yukiya Amano, for initiating this Ministerial Conference to find ways to enhance global nuclear safety, given that we have now reached a critical crossroad in the use of nuclear energy as a source for power generation.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

2. The Malaysian Parliament had unanimously adopted a motion on 17 March 2011, expressing condolences and sympathies to the Government and the people of Japan over the devastating effect and loss of life following the earthquake and the tsunami that struck Japan on 11 March 2011. I take this opportunity to once again, reiterate our solidarity with the people of Japan during these trying times.

Mr. President,

3. Nuclear safety is an issue of increasing importance to Malaysia, not only in view of the recent nuclear accident in Japan, but also in the context of global nuclear power development. In Malaysia, nuclear power development is one of the primary projects embarked by the Government under its Economic Transformation Programme. The first nuclear power plant is envisioned to be commissioned in the year 2021, followed by the second in 2022. The objective is purely to ensure adequate electricity supply for Malaysians beyond the year 2020.

4. The Malaysian Government is currently conducting a detailed study on the nuclear power project before taking a final decision on the matter. Our focus is on the development of a comprehensive nuclear programme, including its legal and regulatory frameworks as well as an assessment of public opinion and public relations plan. The studies would be conducted by independent consultants and in consultations with the IAEA, taking into consideration the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident and the results of “stress tests” on nuclear power plants by Member States. The paramount objective is to ensure that the highest standards of nuclear safety are observed at all times, contributing towards strengthening global nuclear safety.

Mr. President,

5. I wish to thank the IAEA for the report of the International Fact-Finding Mission on the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear accident. An objective and comprehensive assessment of the accident would provide the Member States with the opportunity to further strengthen nuclear

safety, as humanly possible. We recognise that the unfortunate accident had taken place under unprecedented and unimaginable circumstances. But given the trans-boundary effects of the incident, it is now incumbent upon the IAEA to also address public anxiety and concerns over health and the environment. Essentially, we see an urgent need to reinstate public confidence on nuclear energy being a safe source of power generation.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

6. Malaysia views the 5-point proposal made by the Director-General yesterday as central elements in the international community's resolve to enhance global nuclear safety. We are ready to participate actively in deliberating the proposals further and in finding appropriate means for their effective implementation.

7. We reiterate our support and confidence in the IAEA in providing the leadership to promote and strengthen global nuclear safety.

Mr. President,

Distinguished Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

8. ~~I would appreciate your indulgence a little longer~~ as I now have the honour to speak on behalf of the Association of the Southeast Asian Nations or ASEAN.

9. ASEAN would like to congratulate you Mr. Ambassador, on being elected as President of this Conference. We believe in your able leadership and diplomatic skills, and we assure you of ASEAN's full support in carrying out your tasks.

10. ASEAN would also like to thank the Director General of the IAEA for initiating this Ministerial Conference which we believe will provide a forum for discussing the lessons that need to be learned from Fukushima Daiichi accident and political impetus for strengthening nuclear safety throughout the world.

Mr. President,

11. ASEAN would like to express its sympathy and solidarity with Japan over the Fukushima accident. We acknowledge with appreciation Japan's determination to make its utmost efforts to regain control of the situation with all available measures and Japan's assurance to provide information to the international community with maximum transparency on the response to the nuclear power plants accident, and trust Japan will continue to provide such information. We support Japan's resolve to take leadership role in the international undertaking to improve the safety of nuclear power plants, and its willingness to share experience learned from the accident with ASEAN Member States.

12. In this connection, ASEAN takes note of the report of the Japanese Government to the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety which represents a preliminary report on the accident and summary of its evaluation as well as lessons-learned to-date based on the facts which have so far been ascertained.

13. ASEAN also takes note of the dispatch of the International Fact-Finding Mission to Japan from 24 May to 2 June 2011. ASEAN welcomes the preliminary summary report of the Mission and looks forward to further studying the preliminary lessons-learned that have been drawn by the Mission.

14. It is also an honour for me to inform you, Mr. President, that in response to the devastating impact of the recent natural disaster in Japan, a Special ASEAN-Japan Ministerial Meeting has been convened in Jakarta on 9 April 2011. The event reflects the strong and special ties that bind ASEAN and Japan from Leaders' level to people's level and underscores the firm commitment of ASEAN Member States to support the relief, recovery, and reconstruction process in Japan in response to Japan's request.

Mr. President,

15. ASEAN notes the potential trans-boundary impact of accidents at nuclear installations, and in this regard, underlines the need to strengthen cooperation in disaster management, nuclear safety and nuclear emergency preparedness and response through, among others, sharing of experiences and lessons-learned, ensuring prompt

communication and transparency of information sharing in time of disaster and emergency, enhancing coordination mechanisms to facilitate the flow of support in a timely manner as well as conducting training and capacity building programmes for disaster preparedness, emergency response, relief and reconstruction efforts.

16. While recognising the need to strengthen the international framework on nuclear safety and emergency preparedness and response, ASEAN also recognises the need to promote universal adherence to this framework, particularly to the IAEA safety standards, in the development of civilian nuclear energy.

17. ASEAN recognises the central role of the IAEA in strengthening nuclear safety as well as in emergency preparedness and response mechanisms worldwide. We support the IAEA's role in promoting coordination and cooperation in this area, with relevant regional and international organisations, including ASEAN.

Mr. President,
Distinguished Ministers,
Ladies and Gentlemen

18. ASEAN has agreed to develop a coordinated approach that would contribute to global undertakings to improve nuclear safety, in cooperation with the IAEA and other relevant partners as well as with other regional arrangements such as the Asian Nuclear Safety Network.

19. Cognisant of the growing interest in our region to use nuclear power as a viable option in meeting energy needs, ASEAN Member States, particularly those that have planned to embark on nuclear power programme, commit to create an appropriate nuclear safety infrastructure based on IAEA's safety standards and guidance, and welcome assistance by and cooperation with the IAEA in this area, including through IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme.

20. With a view to strengthening capacity in the field of nuclear safety in the region, ASEAN seeks to enhance its cooperation with the IAEA in the areas of developing a legal framework to meet international standards on nuclear safety, establishing regional networks for early warning, developing a regional emergency preparedness and response plan as well as in organising capacity building activities.

21. In closing, please be assured of the ASEAN Member States' active participation throughout this Conference. It is our fervent hope that this Conference could produce a robust action plan which would demonstrate our collective determination to strengthen nuclear safety worldwide.

I thank you Mr. President.