

SPEECH BY H.E. MR. LE DINH TIEN

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At the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety

(Vienna, Austria, 20-24 June 2011)

Mr. President,

Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director General, IAEA,

Distinguished Ministers,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the Delegation of Vietnam, I would like to express our high appreciation to the IAEA Director General for his initiative to organize this Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety after the nuclear accident in Fukushima, Japan. This conference is of great importance particularly in the context that many countries in the world still pursue their efforts to develop nuclear power for their national energy security.

In this forum, once again, we would like to express our deep condolences and solidarity to the Government and People of Japan who have strived to recover from the earthquake and tsunami disaster on March 11th 2011, and reaffirm that together with the international community, Vietnam will continue to cooperate and support the Japanese people to overcome the consequences of those natural disasters and the nuclear accident.

Vietnam highly appreciates the constructive solutions and policies put forwards by the IAEA, EU, international and regional organizations and many countries in order to strengthen nuclear safety after the Fukushima nuclear accident, including their efforts to conduct thorough safety review and assessment of all their existing nuclear power plants, close all those nuclear power plants that do not meet safety requirements, while reviewing safety issues of those nuclear power plants which are under construction or in planning.

Mr. President,

We can clearly recognize the great benefits that mankind has enjoyed

from atomic energy in general and nuclear power in particular over the past decades. However, the Fukushima nuclear accident, once again, remind us about how to develop and use nuclear power for peaceful purposes in a responsible way, in which ensuring the highest nuclear safety is the first priority.

In recent years, Vietnam has made necessary preparations to develop nuclear power in order to meet the energy demand for our national development. At present, in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident, Vietnam continues our programs for nuclear power development, but with our utmost efforts to meet all necessary safety requirements. Accordingly, we focus on developing and improving nuclear safety infrastructures, implementing different measures including capacity-building for the investors, establishing independent nuclear regulatory body, developing professional technical support organizations. At the same time, we enhanced cooperation on nuclear safety with the IAEA and with those countries that developed nuclear power industry.

With the valuable experiences and lessons learned from such nuclear accidents like Three Miles Island, Chernobyl in the past and Fukushima recently, and sharing with points of view of others delegations, the Delegation of Vietnam would like to put forwards the following proposals:

1. The international atomic energy community, with the central role of the IAEA, should review and evaluate the Fukushima nuclear accident – in a comprehensive and transparent manner –in order to draw lessons and disseminate experiences on every safety aspect of nuclear power plant to the IAEA member states.
2. Each country needs to carry out a safety review and assessment of the existing and under-construction nuclear power plants in order to improve, complete and enhance safety measures for nuclear power plants, prohibiting the operation of nuclear power plants that do not meet safety requirements.
3. The international atomic energy community, with the central role of the IAEA, needs to review the nuclear safety standards and propose solutions to enforce these standards during the process of siting, construction, operation and maintenance of nuclear power plants as well as the safety management of radioactive waste and spent fuel.

4. Those countries developing nuclear power and especially those that are preparing or embarking a nuclear power program like Vietnam, need to focus on the investment for developing and enhancing the nuclear safety infrastructures, particularly:

- Improving the legal framework for nuclear safety, enhancing the independence of the Nuclear Regulatory Body and competence of technical support organization(s);
- Strengthening technical capacity, safety culture and responsibility on ensuring safety of nuclear power plants for the Utilities;
- Developing preparedness and emergency response plan against serious radiation and nuclear incidents and accidents;

5. Member states need to strengthen international cooperation in nuclear safety in order to share all information and practical experience continuously, timely and transparently; implementing international legal instruments on nuclear safety, particularly the Nuclear Safety Convention. To achieve this goal, we should enhance the central role of IAEA in promoting and coordinating different programs and joint nuclear safety activities of its member states.

*Mr President,
Ladies and Gentlemen,*

In this conference, we should focus our discussion on issues of concerns to all of us, among them the hidden risks and challenges of nuclear safety, the responsibility and action of member states, the role of the IAEA. It is the hope of our Delegation that we could reach consensus on solutions and joint actions to improve nuclear safety and on related issues through the Conference's Declaration.

On this occasion, our Delegation of Vietnam would like to express our sincere thanks and we look forwards to the continued valuable cooperation and support from the international community for our efforts of nuclear power application and development for peace and development.

I thank you for your attention./.