



**STATEMENT BY MINISTER, PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE,  
SECOND MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT AND WATER  
RESOURCES AND SECOND MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
GRACE FU  
AT THE FUKUSHIMA MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON  
NUCLEAR SAFETY  
15 DECEMBER 2012, FUKUSHIMA, JAPAN**

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**President of the Conference, H.E. Koichiro Gemba**

**Co-President of the Conference, Yang Berhormat Datuk Haji Fadillah bin Haji Yusof**

**Director General Yukiya Amano**

**Excellencies**

**Distinguished Delegates**

On behalf of the Singapore delegation, I thank the Government of Japan for convening this Conference, and assure the President and Co-President of Singapore's full support. I would also like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the tremendous courage, dignity and resilience shown by the Japanese people, in particular the people of this region affected by the Tohoku earthquake, tsunami and the nuclear accident at Fukushima Dai-ichi.

2 The Fukushima Dai-ichi nuclear accident was a painful reminder that low probability, high impact accidents can and do occur. The consequential impact can be far-reaching and transcend geographical boundaries. At the IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety held in June last year, countries discussed some of the lessons from the immediate aftermath of the Fukushima Dai-ichi accident. Eighteen months later, this conference allows the international community to reflect on further findings of the investigation into the accident; to take stock of the progress made in key areas of nuclear safety; and to assess whether international efforts to strengthen the global nuclear safety framework are on the right track.

## Nuclear Safety

3 Since Fukushima, a number of countries have reviewed their reliance on nuclear energy. Some have decided to phase out their nuclear power plants, while others are cautiously proceeding with their nuclear energy plans. Nonetheless, the lack of viable alternative energy sources faced by many countries and climate change concerns make it difficult to completely give up the option of nuclear energy. The search for clean and sustainable energy remains a key consideration, and continued urbanisation and industrialisation, and growing populations will continue to push up global energy demand. At the same time, the Fukushima accident has brought the issue of nuclear safety to the fore. The public and the media in many countries have become more outspoken and concerned about the safety and continued use of nuclear energy. Regaining public confidence is key to its continuation or future deployment. This will require the full commitment of all stakeholders to complete transparency and fully accounting for all the long term costs. Governments will have to address the concerns of their citizens by taking concrete steps to regulate the nuclear industry more effectively, and to ensure the safe operation of nuclear energy installations. Globally, the international community must demonstrate its commitment to strengthening and enhancing the global nuclear safety framework.

4 The IAEA has an important role to play in this respect. The IAEA should seek to set and promote the highest and most robust nuclear safety standards, which should be applied universally. The IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety endorsed by IAEA Member States is a step in the right direction. The next step is to ensure the full and effective implementation of the Plan, which will only be possible with the full commitment and support of all stakeholders. My delegation strongly believes that sharing of best practices and information, and willingness to accept peer review missions, are important for enhancing the global nuclear safety framework. We hope that the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety will continue to examine and consider proposals seeking to strengthen the global nuclear safety framework, in particular enhancing transparency and regulatory effectiveness. We encourage all countries with existing or planned nuclear energy programmes to sign the Convention.

## Emergency Preparedness and Response

5 Nuclear safety cannot just be mere rhetoric. It requires building up physical and human capabilities, institutional structures and systems to react quickly and effectively to nuclear and radiological incidents and emergencies. At the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety held last year, Member States emphasised the need to strengthen national, regional and international emergency preparedness and response systems, as well as the IAEA's role in this regard. Regardless of whether States are currently operating or planning nuclear facilities, establishing strong national and international emergency preparedness and response plans and systems are fundamental to the safe use of nuclear energy.

6 In June this year, Singapore hosted the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Seminar on Nuclear Safety, which brought together experts and policymakers from 27 countries in Asia and Europe with the specific focus of enhancing cooperation in emergency preparedness and response. Last week, Singapore partnered with the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre to host a regional workshop on "Notification, Reporting, and Requesting Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency". Some of the participants were funded by extrabudgetary contributions made to the IAEA by Japan; we express our appreciation to the Government of Japan.

## Regional and International Cooperation

7 We recognise that nuclear safety is primarily a national responsibility. But, as I noted earlier in my statement, any nuclear or radiological incident could have severe cross-border impact on the movement of people and goods, on trade, on health and the environment, not to mention the wider psychological impact on both local and regional populations. It is therefore important and necessary to continue this dialogue on how States can enhance and harmonise emergency preparedness and response capacities and capabilities, nationally, regionally and internationally.

8 In our efforts to establish a strong international nuclear safety framework, regional networks can make an important contribution. We therefore encourage the IAEA to increase its capacity-building cooperation with regional organisations to promote IAEA standards of safety and

security. In Southeast Asia for example, the member countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) are making good progress on an initiative led by Thailand to establish the ASEANTOM, a network of nuclear regulatory bodies that seeks to enhance regional cooperation on nuclear safety, security and safeguards, including emergency preparedness and response and environmental radiation monitoring. We look forward to close collaboration between the ASEAN nuclear regulatory network and international partners.

9 I hope that this Conference will transcend rhetoric and send a clear political message on the importance of the full and effective implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety by all Member States and relevant stakeholders. I look forward to a constructive and productive exchange of views. I hope that this exchange results in strengthened commitment to, and substantive follow-up on, the critical issue of nuclear safety.

10 Thank you.

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