

South Africa
New Version

Address by Ms Nelisiwe Magubane,

Director General,

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South Africa

During the IAEA Fukushima Ministerial Conference

15 December 2012

Japan

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Japan, Co-President of this Conference
His Excellency Mr Koichiro Gamba,

The Minister from Malaysia, Co-President of this Conference,

The Director General, of the IAEA, Mr Yukiya Amano,

Your Excellences,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen

Good Morning.

On behalf of the Republic of South Africa, let me join the previous speakers
in expressing our appreciation of the Co-Presidents and the Director
General of the IAEA for convening this important conference on nuclear

safety. I am very honoured to address ~~you~~ the distinguished delegates in this IAEA Ministerial conference. The conference comes at a time when the IAEA Member States are busy putting into action the lessons learnt from the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, caused by the Earthquake and Tsunami in March 2011.

South Africa is in the process of introducing the new nuclear power reactors as part of the implementation of the Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) 2010-30. Our plan indicates that nuclear power will form part of the energy mix to the extent of 9600MW by 2030, taking our total nuclear production to 11.400 MW. This is the country's 20 year plan of balancing electricity production and consumption. The plan anticipates that by 2030 the country's nuclear power will contribute 23% of the energy mix.

As part of our preparations we are conducting an IAEA based Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review, where a team of experts would come assess our readiness for the nuclear programme in January 2013. We are told that we are the first and only country with an operating nuclear reactor to conduct such a mission. We are doing this simply because our last construction was 30 years ago, and to learn from the challenges experienced recently by other advanced countries. From our experience

thus far, we would like to encourage all other member states to consider carrying out such a review.

South Africa reaffirms its commitments to pursuing the base load Nuclear Energy as part of our mission to reduce carbon emissions. As part of implementation, we recently established the National Nuclear Energy Executive Coordination Committee, comprising of all nuclear programme stakeholder Ministers and headed by the Deputy President. This committee is supported by the Nuclear Energy Technical Committee (NETC), at a Director General level, and chaired by the DG of Energy. All the studies and groundwork to ensure a strategic and implementable programme is carried out by the Nuclear Energy Working Group (NEWG), which is an official based platform, and directly interfaces at an operational level.

I must emphasise that all these nuclear power plans have to be underpinned by one of the primary foundations of its success, which is Nuclear Safety.

The tragic accident in Fukushima increased the global concern on the safety of Nuclear Power Plants in particular. This called for the revisiting of the safety and emergency preparedness aspects of Nuclear Power Plants worldwide. In line with these developments it is prudent that the world

needs to position itself in nuclear safety as regards to the fuel cycle from siting and evaluation activities to radioactive waste disposal leading to the choice of safe nuclear installation sites, hence the sharing of knowledge in an international platform like this one. We also need to solicit support from a plethora of IAEA experts' missions.

South Africa is a Contracting Party to a number of Conventions at the IAEA, one of these is the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS). Since the Japanese TEPCO's Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant accident Convention on Nuclear Safety has coordinated the efforts by various countries towards accident mitigation in line with the European Stress Tests. The lessons learnt thus far have been very re-assuring. Furthermore the lessons learned from the June 2011 Ministerial Conference to the 2nd Extra-ordinary meeting held in August 2012 in Vienna, have certainly strengthened our emphasis on safety and reminded us of lessons we may have once forgotten. Following the Fukushima accident the South African National Nuclear Regulator gave a directive to the nuclear installation operators, to perform safety re-assessments in line with the European "stress tests". The emphasis was put on the technical aspects of safety enhancement following TEPCO's Fukushima accident. These results were shared with other Convention on Nuclear Safety Contracting Parties at the IAEA and

openly with members of the public. We intend to continue with CNS review meetings and ensure a more robust peer review process. South African nuclear installations (Koeberg Nuclear Power Station and SAFARI-1) performed this safety re-assessment daunting task in a very cohesive and coordinated manner. Both record of decisions for the respective safety re-assessments for Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant and the SAFARI-1 Research reactor at Pelindaba came out positive.

Ladies and Gentlemen

I would like to wish those involved with the daunting task of decontamination and decommissioning work in Fukushima Daiichi success in your hard work.

In conclusion we wish to reiterate that the IAEA has a critical role to play in any nuclear related incident or emergency in view of its unique statutory mandate, capabilities and expertise. I would like to say that I am positive that this conference will convey a new and clear, nuclear, message as well as provide assurance to the general public about the safety and relevance of nuclear energy in the energy mix.

As we are looking forward to the fruitful discussions and informative conference I would like to thank the Japanese government, the IAEA and all of you present today.

I thank you.