

STATEMENT

by Sweden

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Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Allow me first of all to express our appreciation to the International Atomic Energy Agency, the OECD/Nuclear Energy Agency and the Government of the Russian Federation for organizing and hosting **this** conference on the important topic of nuclear power in the 21st century.

I wish to thank our Russian hosts for their generous hospitality.

Addressing the topic of nuclear power in the 21st century, I wish to focus my remarks on matters related to nuclear safety, as Sweden considers **these** issues to be of central importance when discussing nuclear energy.

To begin with, I wish to point to the important conclusions that were drawn by the parties of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, at its extraordinary meeting held in August last year.

The accidents at the Chernobyl and Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plants, which resulted in large contaminated areas, and where the population had to be displaced, have showed us the necessity to take action in order to prevent such scenarios in the future.

At the extraordinary meeting last year, the parties to the Convention emphasized that new reactors from now on have to be designed not only to prevent accidents as far as possible,

but also to prevent that severe accidents – if they occur – lead to serious off-site contamination.

The parties also stressed that existing plants should be upgraded in the same line. We consider this recognition to be a milestone in our common efforts to improve nuclear safety.

Mr Chairman,

In Sweden, certain legislative changes entered into force in January 2011. Amendments were made to the Act on Nuclear Activities and to the Environmental Code to make it possible to gradually replace existing nuclear power reactors with new ones. The law also stipulates that the licensee have to decommission one old reactor when the new reactor starts operations.

The company Vattenfall AB submitted a formal application for the construction of one or two new nuclear power reactors in July last year. The application has been the starting point of a process to develop regulations for new reactors.

The plan of the Swedish regulator is to decide on the most important technical requirements of the licensing conditions in 2015. After that, the decision to actually go ahead in the license application process is based on strictly commercial judgment, by the applicant, as they cannot rely on any state subsidies.

The development of regulations for new reactors will also have an impact on the modernization of our existing ten reactors in operation, as existing reactors have to meet modern requirements.

Swedish authorities took action already after the accident at Three Mile Island, by requiring the installation of systems for preventing off-site contamination in the event of a severe

accident. The latest upgrade program was decided in 2005 and all actions will be implemented by the end of 2015 at the latest.

Last month Vattenfall announced publicly that the company intends to start decommissioning two of their older reactors after 50 years of operation. The reason presented was both technical and commercial.

Mr Chairman,

Sweden would also like to stress the importance of actively managing the back-end issues, such as management of spent nuclear fuel and radioactive waste. This includes not only securing safe storage of these materials, **but** also active planning, resourcing and realization of disposal of radioactive materials for which no further use is foreseen.

Nuclear safety is not merely a technical issue. A well-developed safety culture and functioning social structures are key issues to all safety work. We must also take into account cultural aspects of our societies, and how they may or may not, influence the safety in the nuclear programs.

IAEA safety fundamentals and standards together with the Agency's review services are important tools and solid basis for countries having or planning to start up nuclear power programs, as guidelines to implement high nuclear safety standards.

Bilateral, regional and international cooperation is important in order to strengthen nuclear safety world-wide, including through international peer reviews and participation in the work under the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety as well as other activities focusing on safety improvements.

Thank you for your attention.