INTERNATIONAL EXPERTS' MEETING

ON

RADIATION PROTECTION AFTER THE FUKUSHIMA DAIICHI ACCIDENT: PROMOTING CONFIDENCE AND UNDERSTANDING

DDG Opening Remarks

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Welcome Remarks

Good afternoon ladies and gentlemen, I have the honour to welcome you here to Vienna today for this International Experts Meeting to discuss the important Radiation Protection issues raised by the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

International Experts' Meetings

As you are aware this meeting has been arranged in the framework of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety which was unanimously endorsed by Member States at the 2011 IAEA General Conference. The purpose of the Action Plan is to strengthen nuclear safety, emergency preparedness and radiation protection of people and the environment worldwide.

The Action Plan requests the IAEA, inter alia, to organize International Experts Meetings or IEMs with the objective of analysing all the relevant technical aspects and learning the lessons from the Fukushima Daiichi accident. This is the sixth IEM organised by IAEA to date. The previous IEMs covered the topics of:

- Reactor and spent fuel safety;
- Enhancing transparency and communication effectiveness in the event of a nuclear or radiological emergency;
- Protection against extreme earthquakes and tsunamis;
- Decommissioning and remediation after a nuclear accident; and,
- Human and organizational factors in nuclear safety

We have published reports on the first four IEMs and they are all available on the IAEA web site. The fifth report is currently in preparation and we will publish a report of that IEM in due course. The aim of these reports is to share the findings of the international experts as identified during the IEMs with the international community. Two other IEMs will follow, the first in a months' time on the topic of Severe Accident Management and then early next year on the topic of Research and Development.

Chairman + IEM Objectives

I am pleased to see that this meeting has attracted a very high level of interest with around 230 experts who have registered to attend, representing 75 Member States[1] along with experts from 11 relevant international organisations. I believe this level of participation is a reflection of the importance that

[1] And 1 non Member State - Palestine

the international community attaches to the process of learning from the radiation protection issues that have been highlighted by the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

I would now like to take the opportunity to briefly reflect on your programme for this week. This afternoon I would like to welcome Mr Fukui of the Nuclear Regulation Authority who will provide you with an update on the current situation in Japan. Later on this afternoon you will hear about the activities of the international organizations including the UNSCEAR, ICRP and OECD/NEA and also the activities of the IAEA. The technical sessions for this week include time devoted to addressing many of the complex radiation protection issues to be considered during remediation and long term recovery activities. The programme is also forward looking in that it has been designed to incorporate contributions from young professionals and promote capacity building in radiation protection.

Fukushima Accident

It is now close to three years since the Fukushima Daiichi accident, and since then significant progress has been made to further strengthen nuclear safety, emergency preparedness and radiation protection around the world.

I had the opportunity to see at first hand the damage caused by the accident and the scale of the task faced by Japan in decommissioning the Fukushima Nuclear Power Station and the challenges posed by the remediation needs of the Fukushima Prefecture. In particular, I keep in mind the efforts to reduce radiation levels in the affected areas that will improve the living conditions and will ultimately allow the return of residents to their homes and livelihoods.

In this regard one of the key issues faced by the authorities in Japan relates to the safety criteria to be applied to remediation activities. This meeting should provide an important opportunity to exchange expert views and experience on this matter. In particular, to discuss how the established international safety criteria, such as the reference level of annual dose in the range of 1-20mSv, can be applied in practice while taking into account radiation protection criteria and other significant factors in the decision making process for remedial actions.

Relevant Action Plan Activities

In the framework of the Nuclear Safety Action Plan which will be shortly be described by Gustavo Caruso, we have organized and conducted international expert missions to Japan on decommissioning and on remediation. We have strengthened our support to Japan through practical arrangements made with the Fukushima Medical University to undertake collaborative activities in the area of radiation effects on human health and radiation risk management in the Fukushima Prefecture. On a more practical level, we are supporting the development of in-situ underwater techniques to monitor radioactive releases to the marine environment in the event of a nuclear emergency. In this regard, we

are testing an underwater gamma spectrometer at our Laboratories in Monaco and developing radiological mapping and radiation monitoring techniques using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). We are currently cooperating with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), as well as other relevant international organizations to review the generic criteria for radioactive material in food, animal feed and drinking water.

The other significant activity being undertaken by the IAEA of which you are all aware is the preparation of the IAEA Fukushima Report. I know that many of you are already making a significant contribution to this report. The outcome of this IEM will also provide a valuable contribution to the preparation of the IAEA Fukushima Report..

Concluding Remarks

Over the course of the next four and a half days, you will have the opportunity to share your expert views and experience on radiation protection issues with your peers and to identify the lessons learned to date. It is nearly 3 years since the Fukushima Daiichi accident and it is important for all of us, whether we represent national regulators, nuclear plant operators, research institutions, governments or international organisations to maintain the drive to improve nuclear safety, emergency preparedness and radiation protection around the world.

I would like to express my sincere appreciation to Sig Magnusson for having accepted the role of the Chairman for this meeting and I am sure he will provide you with sound leadership for what appears to be a very busy week of presentations and discussions at the IEM. I look forward to seeing his summary of the meeting on Friday.

To conclude, I wish you a productive meeting and I fully expect that you will take advantage of the time you spend together this week to enhance our knowledge and understanding of radiation protection issues raised in the light of the Fukushima Daiichi accident.