

Statement by Hon. Mr. Koji Omi
Minister of State for Science and Technology Policy
Head of the Delegation of the Government of Japan
At the Forty-sixth General Conference
Of the International Atomic Energy Agency

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Government of Japan, I offer you my sincere congratulations on your election as President of the 46th General Conference of the IAEA. I am convinced that your rich experience and able leadership will make this General Conference highly successful. I would also like to extend a hearty welcome to the State of Eritrea, the Kyrgyz Republic and the Republic of Seychelles as new members of the IAEA.

Mr. President,

Promoting the peaceful use of nuclear energy is important in meeting the world's need for stable energy sources and in protecting the environment. In particular, the promotion of nuclear power generation is an essential means of preventing global warming.

Japan adopted a Global Warming Prevention Program, a major part of which calls for the extensive use of nuclear energy, and ratified the Kyoto Protocol in June 2002.

Japan is also undertaking research and development regarding the use of plutonium in fast reactors and planning light water reactors use of plutonium, as was outlined in Japan's Long-Term Program for Nuclear Energy in the 21st century. I would like to refer to the recent case of the falsification of self-inspection records for several nuclear power plants by a Japanese electric power company. Although this matter has not jeopardized the safety at the nuclear power plants, nor decreased the need for nuclear fuel cycle in Japan, I believe that we need to rebuild public confidence in the nuclear safety, recognizing that safety is a vital precondition to the use of nuclear energy. For this purpose, we are now vigorously investigating the details of the matter never to let it happen again.

In consideration of our common need to ensure a stable energy supply and protect the global environment, I am happy to see that several countries consider to place greater importance on the roles of nuclear power within their energy policies. In consideration of the future of

nuclear energy, I am also encouraged by the fact that research and development of innovative nuclear reactors, have gained momentum.

I am very pleased with the progress made in the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor project, also known as the ITER project. This is a cooperative project of Japan, the EU, and Russia to develop a new source of energy. It is my pleasure to announce that Japan has submitted a candidate site for the ITER in Rokkashomura, Aomori Prefecture, at the ITER Negotiation Meeting in June 2002. We will continue to make vigorous efforts to promote this project, and strongly hope that the United States will rejoin the ITER project.

Mr. President,

Japan, as the only country that suffered grave damage of atomic bombs, firmly adheres to its long-standing policy of the Three Non-nuclear Weapon Principles. Under this policy, we shall not possess or produce nuclear weapons, nor permit the introduction of such weapons. I assure you that this policy will not change.

In its endeavors to prevent nuclear proliferation, Japan has sincerely observed the IAEA safeguards agreement, and has promoted the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Japan will continue to comply with the comprehensive safeguards and the Additional Protocol.

Mr. President,

In response to the various challenges to the NPT regime, I would like to emphasize the importance of the universalization of the Additional Protocol. It improves the Agency's capability to detect undeclared nuclear materials and concealed nuclear-related activities by enlarging the scope of information to be provided and by implementing complementary access.

I reaffirm Japan's ongoing commitment to the universalization of the Additional Protocol. To help keep the momentum going, Japan is going to host, in cooperation with the IAEA, the *International Conference for the Universalization of the Additional Protocol* in December this year in Tokyo. In the Conference, reviewing and consolidating the results of five regional seminars, participants will be strongly encouraged to discuss

concrete steps towards the universalization of the Additional Protocol.

Japan urges the Secretariat to make further efforts towards early adoption of Integrated Safeguards in order not only to rationalize the safeguards implementation but also to give an incentive to concluding the Additional Protocol. I hope the Secretariat will take the initiative in this.

Mr. President,

The reinforcement of the non-proliferation regime is an important issue closely related to regional security. Japan has strong concern over the issue of implementation of North Korea's safeguards agreement with the IAEA as it relates to security in northeast Asia as well as to the whole non-proliferation regime. We recognize that the most realistic and effective way forward is the implementation of the Agreed Framework between the U.S. and North Korea and the promotion of the activities of the Korean Peninsula Energy Development Organization, known as the KEDO. Japan reaffirms its intention to cooperate in the implementation of the Agreed Framework and its support for the KEDO. My government also urges the North Korea to cooperate with Agency's safeguards activities without

delay, by fulfilling its obligation quickly and completely, under the safeguards agreement, which is still binding.

Mr. President,

Since the grave tragedy occurred at September 11 last year, we have been challenged by the threat of terrorism to the peace and security of the world. Nuclear terrorism, in particular, is a new but serious threat to the nuclear non-proliferation regime. International Community should unite to cope with this new threat.

Japan praises the Agency's efforts in responding to the issue of nuclear terrorism. Just after the Agency announced the Action Plan for Protection against Nuclear Terrorism this March, Japan pledged half a million U.S. dollars to support the Action Plan. We also believe that the strict control of nuclear materials and radioactive isotopes is crucial in preventing nuclear terrorism. I would like to voice our strong support for the Agency's activities in this area and call on other Member States to recognize the importance of these efforts and to pledge their contribution to the special fund.

Mr. President,

I would like to take this opportunity to refer to the nuclear materials transport, which plays a vital role in the peaceful use of nuclear energy. In fact, nuclear materials transports are carried out by many member states of the IAEA.

I would, therefore, like to point out that the preconditions necessary for smooth maritime transport, such as freedom of navigation as recognized under international law, must be respected.

I trust that the Agency will continue to play a significant role in this regard utilizing its scientific and technical expertise. Japan will actively participate in the Agency's activities, including the International Conference on the Safety of Nuclear Transport to be held in July next year, with a view to promoting transport safety.

Mr. President and my Fellow Delegates,

Towards the end of my speech, I am obliged to refer to Japan's basic policy of calling upon all international organizations for a "zero nominal growth budget". With this in mind, I urge the Secretariat to set clear priorities, to

achieve further cost reductions in all activities and seek more efficient safeguard operations, within the limited resources available. I also strongly encourage Member States to pay their assessed contributions and their share of the Technical Cooperation Fund in full, without delay.

Mr. President,

I would like to emphasize that Japan will continue to advocate the total elimination of nuclear weapons. At the same time, we believe that the peaceful use of nuclear energy will contribute to the welfare of mankind and to the stability and development of the world.

We also believe that the IAEA will continue to play a significant role in attaining the objectives stated above. Japan, therefore, is determined to support the IAEA so that the Agency can fulfill its noble mission under the leadership of Director General Mohamed ElBaradei.

In closing, it is my sincere hope that discussions at this General Conference will bring about such results that will enable us to advance one firm step further towards a brighter future for mankind.

Thank you very much for your attention.