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Nuclear technologies have a wide range of applications and are used in most countries – from treating cancer, enhancing crop yields, protecting the environment and managing scarce water resources, to name just a few. But nuclear power for the generation of electricity remains the best known peaceful application of this technology. And it is clear that, eighteen months after the Fukushima Daiichi accident, nuclear power will remain an important energy option for many countries. Our latest projections show a steady rise in the number of nuclear power plants in the world over the next 20 years, with most growth expected to take place in Asia.

The IAEA has a central role to play in ensuring that any expansion in the use of nuclear energy occurs in a way that is safe and secure, and does not contribute to proliferation.

Let me touch upon some areas of IAEA work relevant to this Committee’s work.

Nuclear Non-proliferation

As reaffirmed last month at the IAEA General Conference, IAEA safeguards are a fundamental component of the nuclear non-proliferation regime. IAEA safeguards contribute to our collective security and help to create an environment conducive to nuclear cooperation.

So what is the current state of play?

Safeguards agreements are in force with 180 States, of which 172 are NPT non-nuclear-weapon States with comprehensive safeguards agreements. However, 13 countries have yet to meet their obligations under the NPT and conclude a comprehensive safeguards agreement with the Agency. For these states, the Agency cannot draw any safeguards conclusions. The Agency therefore urges all such remaining NPT States parties to conclude comprehensive safeguards agreements as soon as possible.

The number of States with additional protocols in force continues to rise. It now stands at 118. This is very encouraging because the additional protocol is essential to enabling the Agency to provide credible assurances not only that declared nuclear material is not being diverted from peaceful uses, but also that there are no undeclared nuclear material and activities in a country. Clearly, we are heading in the right direction, and the Agency encourages all States to bring additional protocols into force as soon as possible.

Safeguards implementation continues to evolve to address new challenges, to take into account lessons learned and to take advantage of new technology. In this regard, the Agency has continued to evolve what we call the
State-level concept for the planning, conduct and evaluation of safeguards. Safeguards implementation, pursued in accordance with this concept, is based on a comprehensive evaluation of all safeguards relevant information regarding a State. It helps the Agency to tailor its verification activities.

**Nuclear Disarmament**

The IAEA, with its knowledge and experience, is able to assist in the nuclear disarmament process by independently verifying that nuclear material from dismantled weapons is never used again for military purposes.

In this context, the Agency continues to work with the Russian Federation and the United States, at their request, in the development of an agreement that provides for Agency verification of the disposition of plutonium designated by the Russian Federation and the USA as no longer required for their respective defense programmes.

**Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zones**

The five existing nuclear-weapon-free zone treaties, covering vast regions of the world, recognize the verification role of the IAEA through the application of Agency safeguards. The IAEA also supports the creation of new nuclear-weapon-free zones.

In November 2011, Director General Amano convened an *IAEA Forum on Experience of Possible Relevance to the Creation of a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in the Middle East*. The Forum provided an opportunity in which participants could learn from the experience of other regions relevant to the establishment of a nuclear weapon free zone in the Middle East. There was a constructive exchange of views on this important issue, and the IAEA stands ready to continue assisting international efforts to pursue this goal.

**Nuclear Security**

Finally, let me turn to nuclear security.

As evidenced at the High Level Meeting on Nuclear Terrorism convened by the Secretary General, world leaders in recent years have focused considerable attention on the threat of nuclear terrorism and the need for enhanced nuclear security. While primary responsibility for nuclear security lies with national governments, it has been recognized that the IAEA has a central role as the global platform for strengthening nuclear security.

Put simply, the IAEA helps to minimize the risk of nuclear and other radioactive material falling into the hands of terrorists, or of nuclear facilities being subjected to malicious acts.

The Agency has established internationally accepted guidance that is used as a benchmark for nuclear security. The Agency helps countries to apply this guidance through expert peer review missions, specialist training and human resource development programs. In fact, the IAEA has trained over 12 000 people in more than 120 countries in nuclear security in the last decade.

The Agency has provided assistance to ensure that considerable amounts of high enriched uranium have been put into more secure storage. The IAEA Illicit Trafficking Database tracks thefts and other unauthorized activities involving nuclear and other radioactive materials.
Despite the increased interest in nuclear security, progress towards entry into force of the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material remains slow. Only 58 States have adopted the Amendment. The Amendment obligates States Parties to protect nuclear material in domestic use, transport and storage, as well to protect nuclear facilities against sabotage. It makes an important difference to global nuclear security, and its entry into force must be afforded the highest priority.

Much progress has been made in recent years in countering the threat of nuclear terrorism, but more needs to be done. As a next step, in July 2013, the Agency will organize a high-level International Conference on Nuclear Security.

Conclusion

The IAEA is unique within the UN system, being the only organization with expertise in nuclear technologies. The Agency uses this expertise to help countries benefit from nuclear science and technology for sustainable development. The Agency also works to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and to enhance global nuclear security and safety. Such efforts demonstrate the tangible contributions that the IAEA is making to international peace and security.

Thank you.