STATEMENT
BY

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DURING CLUSTER III:
PEACEFUL USES OF NUCLEAR ENERGY

THIRD SESSION OF THE
PREPARATORY COMMITTEE FOR THE 2010 REVIEW
CONFERENCE OF THE PARTIES TO THE TREATY ON
THE NON-PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

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Chairperson,

My delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement.

The bargain struck in the negotiations that led to the adoption of the Treaty on Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) was that non-nuclear weapon States (NNWS), in giving up the pursuit of developing nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices, will have access to nuclear technology in order to benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear energy that would contribute to their prosperity and sustainable development. In return, nuclear weapon States (NWS) undertook to accomplish the elimination of their nuclear arsenals in order to fulfill their commitments under the Treaty.

Ten years ago, at the Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2000 NPT Review Conference, held here in New York, South Africa, in referring to the valuable work of the IAEA undertaken since its inception, stated and I quote: “Although the possibilities for the peaceful uses of nuclear energy were promoted, the investments which have unfortunately been made in “peaceful uses” are outweighed by the investments in the atom’s destructive capability.” (unquote)

South Africa then indicated that we needed to take steps to ensure that this trend of the past be reversed. Regrettably, developments since the 2000 NPT Review Conference have merely confirmed the continuation of this trend. It is therefore incumbent upon all of us to ensure that we will not again be faced with a lost decade and empty promises. Recent statements on the importance of nuclear disarmament are encouraging, and we should build on this new momentum that could lead to real and irreversible progress on nuclear disarmament.

Chairperson,

South Africa highly values the IAEA’s activities related to nuclear science, technology and applications. The Agency plays a leading role, including through its technical co-operation projects, to promote the peaceful uses of nuclear energy that contributes to development and prosperity, which also enhances international peace and security.

My delegation reiterates its view that knowledge maintenance and competence building in nuclear sciences are of high priority, in particular in developing countries.

The Agency’s technical assistance and AFRA continue to play a relevant role in this endeavour and we acknowledge that such assistance also enhances the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the New Partnership for African Development (NEPAD).

Chairperson,

South Africa continues to place great importance on nuclear safety and has, over the years, been instrumental in the elaboration of the various Agency safety fundamentals and guides through its participation in the IAEA Commission on Safety Standards and all four Safety Standards Committees. My delegation is of the view that the sharing of expertise and lessons learned in safety-related matters amongst Member States is of great importance.

In conclusion, South Africa views radioactive waste management as an important area in the chain of the use of nuclear energy. In this connection radioactive waste management is an integral part of South Africa’s Nuclear Energy Policy and receives elaborate attention in the country’s Radioactive Waste Management Policy and Strategy. Likewise, South Africa is of the view that the rising demand for nuclear energy and growing applications of nuclear science and technology requires us to abolish effective nuclear regulatory systems.

I thank you.