South Africa

Statement on Cluster 3 (Peaceful uses of nuclear energy)

3rd Prepcom for the 2015 Revcon

Chairperson,

My delegation associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement and would like to share some additional views in its national capacity.

Chairperson,

Along with the legal commitment to the elimination of nuclear weapons and measures to prevent proliferation, the NPT reaffirms the inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear energy pursuant to Article IV of the Treaty. Peaceful nuclear co-operation and access to the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, pursuant to Article IV of the NPT, constitute one of the core objectives of the Treaty. In giving effect to Articles IV (1) and IV (2), South Africa therefore cautions against any decision that would amount to a reinterpretation of, or restriction on, this inalienable right.

South Africa supports the 2010 NPT Revcon outcome which inter alia states that each country’s choices and decisions in the field of peaceful uses should be respected and under which Member States undertook to facilitate and reaffirm the right of States Parties to participate in the fullest possible exchange of equipment, materials and scientific and technological information for peaceful uses of nuclear energy; to give preferential treatment to the non-nuclear-weapon States parties to the Treaty, taking the needs of developing countries, in particular, into account; to facilitate the transfer of nuclear technology and international cooperation in conformity with Articles I, II, III and IV of the Treaty, and to eliminate undue restrictions inconsistent with the Treaty.

The demand for nuclear power and the application of nuclear technology will continue to increase. Nuclear power and the peaceful applications of nuclear technology, if optimised to the fullest, can meaningfully enhance the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and could contribute to the post-2015 UN development agenda. The inalienable right to the peaceful use of nuclear technology is of particular relevance and importance in attaining sustainable and accelerated economic growth in Africa.

Chairperson,

South Africa attaches great importance to the IAEA’s Technical Cooperation Programme which contributes towards addressing the socio-economic needs and sustainable development challenges of developing countries. Indeed the Agency’s TC projects are more than just political commitments, they constitute important building blocks to assist developing countries in their efforts to alleviate poverty and achieve the Millennium Development Goals. The TC Programme is also a mechanism which enables the Agency to meet its statutory objective of accelerating and enlarging the contribution of atomic energy to peace, health and prosperity throughout the world.

The IAEA’s contribution to food security and poverty alleviation through the application of technologies to improve animal health and agriculture and to increase food security has been of particular value to the African continent. South Africa believes that success of the Joint FAO/IAEA’s Division of Nuclear Techniques in Food and Agriculture in developing technologies such as the Sterile Insect Technique (SIT) and supporting Member States in the implementation thereof, is one of the best examples of the practical application of nuclear energy for development.
Chairperson,

Whilst extra-budgetary support for Technical Cooperation is welcomed, South Africa remains concerned about the lack of sufficient, assured and predictable (SAP) funding for the Agency to fulfil its promotional mandate and to meet the increasing number of requests for TC projects by Member States. We call on all Member States of the IAEA to pay their contributions to the TC Fund in full and on time. South Africa is also of the opinion that greater efforts should be made to balance the allocation of resources between the Major Programmes of the IAEA to enable the full implementation of Article IV of the NPT. In this regard my delegation looks forward to continued discussions in the IAEA on financing and rendering the TCF sufficient, assured and predictable (SAP).

Chairperson,

South Africa welcomes the extra-budgetary support provided to the IAEA Technical Cooperation which has proved to be a source of funding for projects like the project to Improve Veterinary Laboratory Capacities in Sub-Saharan Africa for the Early and Rapid Diagnoses and Control of Various Transboundary Animal Diseases. South Africa has contributed through the African Renaissance Fund and the United States of America and Japan have made contributions through the Peaceful Use Initiative (PUI) to ensure the full implementation of this project. This project will significantly contribute to food security and poverty reduction on the African continent and we thank the US and Japan for their support in this regard.

Chairperson,

Increasing the diversity of South Africa’s electricity production energy mix is a priority. South Africa is working towards having an energy sector by 2030 that promotes economic growth and development through energy infrastructure investment, advances social equity through expanded access to affordable energy services and underpins environmental sustainability by reducing pollution and mitigating the effects of climate change. Nuclear energy constitutes an important element in the energy mix required to generate power needed for our development.

South Africa acknowledges the increasing role that the IAEA will have to play in the future, especially in countries that already have operating nuclear power plants. In preparation for our nuclear build, South Africa hosted an IAEA Integrated Nuclear Infrastructure Review (INIR) Mission during 2013. South Africa is the first country with an existing Nuclear Power Plant to request such a mission, which has been recognised as a best practice by the IAEA.

South Africa supports all the IAEA's activities that strengthen global nuclear safety and believes that the purpose of enhancing nuclear safety should be to positively contribute to the development and utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful uses. South Africa also appreciates the work of the Agency in supporting the activities of the Member States to enhance nuclear security.

In conclusion Chairperson,

South Africa believes that the integrity of the NPT rests on a fundamental bargain across the three pillars of the Treaty, each of which must be recognized and upheld. The peaceful use of nuclear energy is an inalienable integral right that should not be compromised. In this regard, the Treaty must be implemented in all its aspects without favour or prejudice and no aspect should be more strictly enforced or require stricter implementation than any other.

Thank you.