

**Opening Remarks**

**International Seminar on Nuclear Safety and Security Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

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**NCP Islamabad, Pakistan**

**Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority**

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## Welcome and Introduction

- Honourable Minister of State, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, my dear colleagues, good morning. Thank you for inviting me to open this International Seminar on Nuclear Safety and Security Challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and to celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Agency (PNRA).
- Before I go on any further, I want to express IAEA's support for the people of Japan as they respond to and recover from the tragic events that occurred on March 11th. The IAEA, WHO, FAO and officials from other agencies have maintained close contact with Japanese offices and have provided the Japanese government with expertise, advice and technical assistance in a variety of areas. Upon request, we have sent teams to Japan, drawing from the skills, expertise, and competence developed in the Agency, to help assess, survey, monitor, and sample the areas in and around Fukushima Prefecture. Safety remains at the forefront of IAEA's efforts, and the IAEA is committed to help Japan work responsibly and rigorously through this terrible experience, to strengthen nuclear safety and nuclear regulatory practices as well as incorporate lessons learned from today's crisis into tomorrow's strengthened safety and security practices.
- Japan's nuclear crisis has given rise to new regulatory initiatives around the globe, as many regulators have launched and are conducting safety checks (some call them stress tests) at existing NPPs to verify and assess their nuclear safety and security procedures, and their regulatory practices.
- While some governments have decided to pause in the development of nuclear energy, or to slow down its pace, many have recalled the on-going need for low-carbon energy development. This means solar energy, hydropower and wind farms, and YES, nuclear as a way to ease the world's rapidly growing energy demands and reduce its reliance on fossil fuels.
- In the wake of the unfolding events in Japan, this conference on Nuclear safety and security challenges in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, provides us with the frame to focus and discuss seriously the competencies, complexities and challenges faced in identifying our strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement in the safe and secure use of nuclear technology.

- Pakistan joined the IAEA in 1957, collaborating with the Agency on nuclear safety and security standards and guidance for decades. With the inception of Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Agency in 2001, the PNRA has worked closely with the IAEA through its Technical Cooperation Programmes to build capacity in developing its human resources through education and training, as well as fostering the growth of a robust regulatory infrastructure. Through contributing their own nuclear experts, the PNRA now assists other Member States in their nuclear safety and security capacity building endeavours.
- In the area of Nuclear Security, the PNRA has shown its strong commitment to developing an effective national system to provide for the implementation of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and the Code of Conduct on the safety and security of radioactive sources. As you may know, I have a personal “soft spot” with the amendment to the CPPNM, starting with a conspiratorial meeting in 2001 in a restaurant in Stockholm, and ending with an exhausted Chairman and Draft amendment in Vienna in March 2003.
- In consultation with the IAEA, the PNRA and the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), began efforts to strengthen their nuclear security framework via multiple capacity building efforts, to include: personnel training in Nuclear Security; Security upgrades for radioactive sources at Medical Centres; establishment of effective border control via donation of radiation detection equipment; and through the establishment of a Physical Protection Training Laboratory as a part of the Nuclear Security Training Centre in Islamabad.
- The Nuclear Security Programme in Pakistan and the upgraded structure of its Nuclear Security framework is progressive and provides the advantage of lessons learned to other Member States in the establishment of an effective nuclear security programme.

#### Concluding Remarks

- To conclude, I wish you a productive conference and fully expect that you will take advantage of the time you spend together to think through and discuss Nuclear safety and security—its strengths, weaknesses and areas needing improvement, with a view that continuous improvement is THE way forward in nuclear safety and security.

– Thank you for your attention.