

Opening Address

**ASIA-EUROPE MEETING (ASEM) SEMINAR ON NUCLEAR
SAFETY**

International Instruments for Ensuring Nuclear Safety

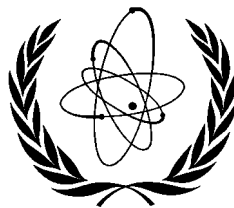
4 - 5 November 2013

Vilnius, Lithuania

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INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Welcome and Introduction

Madam President, your Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen, it is an honour and a pleasure for me to open this Asia Europe Meeting Seminar on Nuclear Safety, today in Vilnius, in the name of the IAEA Director General Mr Yukiya Amano.

The Asia Europe Meeting Seminar on Nuclear Safety in Singapore last year addressed National, Regional and International Nuclear Emergency Preparedness and Response, and agreed that while it was States' responsibility to put in place strong legal and regulatory frameworks, international cooperation was necessary given the transboundary nature of nuclear incidents.

One way in particular that States can achieve their State responsibility in the frame of a collective international undertaking, is through International Instruments for Ensuring Nuclear Safety, the topic of this year's meeting.

International instruments under the IAEA auspices cover two broad areas: nuclear safety, and emergency preparedness and response, all reflecting on, and loosely linked with, IAEA safety standards. I will mention for completeness a third related area: that of nuclear security. These instruments provide the legal framework for conducting activities related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and ionizing radiation in a manner that adequately protects the public, society and the environment. They commit Contracting Parties to maintaining a high level of safety and security through the development and implementation of government legislation and regulatory requirements to oversee operations at their nuclear facilities.

The Agency, as depositary and Secretariat, plays a leading role in shaping a safer nuclear community with the ultimate goal of strengthening nuclear safety worldwide. In this respect, the Statute of the IAEA clearly states the importance of implementation of our safety standards.

Nuclear safety is addressed through the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS), focused on the safety of nuclear power plants; and the Joint Convention on the safety of spent fuel management and on the safety of radioactive waste management. Precisely today in Vienna, experts gather for the fourth and last meeting of the Working Group on Effectiveness and Transparency tasked to report to the sixth Review Meeting of the CNS on a list of actions to strengthen the CNS and on proposals to amend, where necessary, the Convention.

Emergency conventions include the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident requiring countries to provide prompt notification of any nuclear accident that may affect other countries, and the Convention on Assistance in the case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency aimed at addressing the provision of prompt assistance in the event of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency. These Conventions are supplemented by bilateral agreements between

neighbouring States, standards, practical arrangements and mechanisms, many of them operated by the Agency.

Just coming back from the international Conference in Abu Dhabi devoted to the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources I could not forget the non-legally binding Codes of Conduct developed by the Agency, including the Code of Conduct on the Safety of Research Reactors.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

No one convention or code of conduct can adequately cover all aspects of Nuclear Safety, but they provide Contracting Parties with the ability to responsibly govern nuclear safety within their countries, and to demonstrate their international commitment to nuclear safety.

The nuclear safety challenge will always remain to permanently avoid complacency. Two and a half years after the Fukushima accident, we need to jointly keep the positive momentum to strengthen nuclear safety, and international safety instruments are part of our tools to capture progress made.

I look forward to the upcoming discussions on nuclear safety and I expect a productive meeting.

Thank you for your attention.