Statement

by

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at the

High Level Meeting Nuclear Safety and Security
Meeting I - Nuclear Safety

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Check against delivery
Mr Secretary General,

Distinguished Chairmen,

Dear Colleagues,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Everybody in this room will agree that the Fukushima nuclear catastrophe has brought about a watershed in our approach to nuclear safety. We owe it to future generations that safety concerns come first when approaching nuclear power generation.

In essence, the following elements have to stand out as key instruments in our new nuclear safety tool box:

- Transparency at all levels at all times at all sites. Thus, verification concepts such as “voluntarily” or “by consent” - when referring to on-site visits or peer reviews of nuclear power plants or crisis related information - have to be elements of the past, and of binding nature as of now.

- Independence, a sufficient resource base and clear-cut lines of responsibility and communication for national regulatory authorities. These are essential requirements if they are to fulfil their tasks for their national constituency as well as in the interest of the international community as a whole.

- Strengthening of IAEA standards and Conventions based upon lessons learnt from Fukushima together with rigorous implementation without any exceptions.
Distinguished Chairmen

Fukushima has also shown that liability regimes do not – by a large degree – live up to the dangers and more specifically to potential damages arising from nuclear accidents. Let me paraphrase the outcome of the IAEA June 2011 Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety in Vienna in which I had the honour to participate: nuclear safety is not to be taken for granted, more severe nuclear accidents have become likely, and the international community has to prepare now.

Protection of the civil population and national infrastructure has to include a comprehensive and unlimited liability regime. This means compensation for all damages without limitations in time or in amounts. Litigation must take place where the interests of the victim are best protected.

Whilst energy policies remain a prerogative of any country, potential repercussions of accidents don’t. In view of possible catastrophes and severe incidents the energy mix has in fact become a shared responsibility. Questions of safety and security cannot stop at national doorsteps. Clearly, the status quo no longer offers the answers we are seeking. In the interest of present and future generations our common goals have to be based on sustainable, non-nuclear energy solutions.

Thank you for your attention.