

**Statement by H.R.H. Princess Bajrakitiyabha Mahidol
Ambassador and Resident Representative of Thailand
to the International Atomic Energy Agency,
Head of the Thai Delegation
at the 58th Regular Session of the General Conference of the IAEA
Vienna International Centre, Vienna
22 – 26 September 2014**

**Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished Delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

1. At the outset, Thailand wishes to congratulate and welcome the new Member States of the International Atomic Energy Agency – the Union of the Comoros, the Republic of Djibouti, the Co-operative Republic of Guyana, and the Republic of Vanuatu.

2. I also wish to congratulate His Excellency Mr. Aliyar Lebbe Abdul Azeez of Sri Lanka upon your election as President and the other Bureau members upon their election to the Bureau of the 58th Session of the IAEA General Conference. We are confident that you will lead this Conference to a successful outcome and I assure you of my delegation's full support and cooperation.

3. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to His Excellency Mr. Xolisa Mabhongo of South Africa, President of the 57th General Conference, as well as Mr. Yukiya Amano, Director-General of the IAEA, and his able team for their excellent work during the past year.

Mr. President,

4. The international community is facing an ever growing demand for energy, and nuclear power has emerged as a possible option amid security concerns. The peaceful use of atomic energy must be enhanced and secure. In this regard, the IAEA has an important and meaningful role to play. On our part,

Thailand also continues to attach great importance to issues of nuclear safety, security and safeguards at the international, regional and national levels. We are committed to maintaining our constructive role in upholding these underlying principles of the IAEA.

5. At the Nuclear Security Summit early this year, Thailand stressed the need for the international community, including the IAEA, to work together in helping countries bridge capacity gaps in implementation in order to strengthen nuclear security. We see the importance of engaging all key stakeholders to help raise awareness on building up a nuclear security culture.

6. At the regional level, Thailand is pleased that the Network of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Southeast Asia or ASEANTOM concluded a second formal meeting during 25 – 27 August this year in Chiang Mai. The meeting reviewed activities conducted during the past year and discussed further activities under the work plan for 2015 -2016. These activities include a number of regional workshops and training courses on emergency preparedness and response as well as on nuclear security culture and management.

Mr. President,

7. We are confident that this network would additionally support and contribute to the common purpose of ASEAN in preserving Southeast Asia as a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone. Nuclear-Weapon-Free zones serve as building blocks to a world free of nuclear weapons and are important confidence building mechanisms. ASEAN is currently in consultations with the Nuclear Weapon States in order to conclude their signing and ratification of protocols to SEANWFZ at the earliest opportunity. Nevertheless, we are dismayed that, to date, the conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and all other weapons of mass destruction has still not been convened in accordance with the outcome decision of the 2010 NPT Review Conference. As the 2015 NPT Review Conference is soon approaching, we call on all parties concerned to work together in good faith through constructive dialogue to bring about the convening of this important Conference as soon as possible.

Mr. President,

8. Thailand notes with satisfaction that all 10 ASEAN member states have now become member states of the IAEA. In this connection, the ASEAN Secretariat and the IAEA have embarked on a preliminary exploration on formalised cooperation between the two. We hope to see continued development on this front, as we are confident that this cooperation will further strengthen nuclear safety, security and safeguards in the region.

9. Thailand has also been working towards strengthening nuclear safety and security at the national level. We have committed to improving our national environmental radiation monitoring capabilities by expanding our Early Warning Environmental Stations to 17 ambient and 3 underwater Gamma Radiation Monitoring Stations. In addition, Thailand and other ASEAN member states are joining efforts to establish an ASEANTOM environmental radiation monitoring network. This network will provide a platform for sharing, among ASEAN member states, environmental radiation monitoring activities and data.

10. Thailand and the IAEA hosted a National Nuclear Security Workshop on the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan (INSSP) from 26 to 28 November last year. The workshop was intended to increase awareness of nuclear security issues among organisations responsible for nuclear security and to discuss how to further implement the INSSP in Thailand. We have also joined the International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centers (INSSCs) and the International Nuclear Security Education Network (INSEN).

11. In addition to our capacity building and facilities improvement programmes, we are in the process of amending domestic legislation on the Atomic Energy for Peace Act of Thailand. Once finalised, it will allow us to proceed with the ratification of relevant international conventions.

Mr. President,

12. Peaceful use of nuclear energy remains an important part of our energy mix in Thailand's Power Development Plan, for its low carbon emission and its cost effectiveness in comparison to other energy sources such as fossil fuel and natural gas. In this regard, we must take careful steps in planning and

preparing to ensure that the use of nuclear energy is safe and secure. It is important that we focus on strengthening related national legislation, nuclear safety and security measures, human resources, along with creating public awareness and understanding on these issues. These challenging tasks not only require close coordination among the relevant Thai agencies, but also entail continuous cooperation between Thailand and important international organisations in this area such as the IAEA.

13. Thailand regards radioactive waste management as a key requirement for the safe and secure use of nuclear technologies for peaceful purposes. In this connection, we welcome this year's Scientific Forum theme on "Radioactive Waste: Meeting the Challenge". Thailand will also be holding an exhibition entitled "Radioactive Waste Management in Thailand: Control and Care" during the General Conference, and we would like to invite all delegates to visit our exhibition.

Mr. President,

14. Thailand has been working closely with the IAEA on several technical cooperation projects in various areas, especially in the area of food, agriculture and medical applications of atomic energy. The Office of Atoms for Peace recently finalised 7 technical cooperation projects with the IAEA for the upcoming 2016 – 2017 cycle. In addition, Thailand's Ministry of Public Health is undertaking several projects on quality assurance of diagnostic radiology and radiotherapy systems with the goal of standardising services of diagnostic radiology and radiotherapy throughout the Thai public health system.

15. In addition to applying nuclear technology for domestic use, we are also able to extend cooperation to neighboring countries, such as Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar, in the field of radiation metrology. We wish to further highlight that Thailand is the first country in ASEAN that serves personal monitoring by means of Optically Stimulated Luminescence Dosimeters (OSLD). Radiation workers in nearby countries can register with the Department of Medical Sciences in order to make use of the OSLD personal monitoring service, which will help equip them with better and proper radiation protection.

16. Thailand is also pleased to announce that, as in previous years, we have pledged to contribute 100 per cent of our target share to the Technical Cooperation Fund for 2015.

Mr. President,

17. I wish to reiterate Thailand's support and confidence in the work of the Agency and the able leadership of Mr. Yukiya Amano, the Director-General. In the face of current challenges and the trans-boundary impact of nuclear accidents and threats, cooperation between the IAEA and other international organisations, as well as Member States, and amongst Member States themselves, remains vitally important. You can count on our continued cooperation and support at this and future sessions of the General Conference.

I thank you, Mr. President.
