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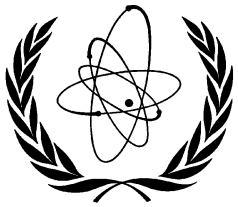

INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen.

I am very pleased to speak at the 48th Annual Conference of the Japan Atomic Industrial Forum.

When I last addressed this conference three years ago, the accident at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant was keenly fresh in all our minds.

Many thousands of people experienced serious and lasting hardship. Many are still unable to return to their homes. The accident also caused considerable public anxiety in Japan and in many other countries.

At the 2012 JAIF Annual Conference, I explained the immediate measures being taken to improve nuclear safety throughout the world after the accident, and talked about implementation of the IAEA *Action Plan on Nuclear Safety*.

Since then, substantial work has been done to further improve global nuclear safety.

World leaders, regulators, and the nuclear industry took the Fukushima Daiichi accident very seriously. There was a general acknowledgement of the very clear lesson that safety must always come first.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite the Fukushima Daiichi accident, nuclear power has continued to play an important part in the global energy mix.

There are presently 443 nuclear power reactors in operation in 30 countries.

IAEA projections show that use of nuclear power will increase in the coming decades, although growth rates are likely to be slower than we estimated previously.

Many countries see nuclear power as a stable and clean source of energy, which can improve energy security and help to mitigate the impact of climate change.

Energy is the engine of development and economic growth, and global demand for energy is growing steadily in all countries. Access to stable sources of energy is vital. In order to meet that growing demand, countries need to make the best use of the sources of energy at their disposal, in a clean, efficient and sustainable way.

Nuclear power can make countries more competitive by delivering the steady supply of baseload electricity needed to power a modern economy. It also helps to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, such as carbon dioxide.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is true that a number of European countries have moved away from nuclear power.

Germany announced the phasing out of all nuclear power plants, while Switzerland halted new reactor building.

But if we look at global trends, we are still seeing growth in the use of nuclear power. Of the 30 countries that are already using nuclear power, thirteen are building new nuclear power plants, while another twelve countries are seriously considering it.

The geographical focus appears to be switching to Asia.

Around two thirds of the 65 nuclear power reactors now under construction are in Asia. This should not really surprise us. Asia has seen exceptional economic growth in recent decades.

A number of developing countries in other parts of the world have taken a decision to introduce nuclear power.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There is sometimes a misconception that countries face a choice between nuclear and renewables.

Many countries are investing heavily in renewable energy sources, such as wind and solar. It is clear that renewables will continue to grow in importance.

But many of these countries also continue to use nuclear power.

In fact, they see the two as complementary, with nuclear providing reliable baseload electricity, which many renewables are not yet in a position to do.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Needless to say, safety is the key to the future development of nuclear power.

The Fukushima Daiichi accident was a painful reminder that a terrible accident can happen anywhere, even in a developed industrial country. Plant operators, nuclear regulators and governments must demonstrate total commitment to the principle of "safety first."

The IAEA is finalising a report on the Fukushima Daiichi accident, with input from nearly 200 international experts. The aim is to produce an authoritative and detailed account of what went wrong, and why, that will help to strengthen nuclear safety.

I have said before – and the Japanese authorities have acknowledged – that this was not just a terrible natural disaster. Japan was not sufficiently prepared for a severe accident. In fact, many people considered such an accident in Japan simply unthinkable.

Action has been taken all over the world to ensure that the lessons are learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident. A more robust nuclear safety culture has taken root everywhere.

But this is no reason for complacency. All of us must do everything in our power to continuously improve nuclear safety, in Japan and elsewhere. Nuclear safety will always be a work in progress.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The IAEA is a technical organization and does not seek to influence countries' decisions on whether to use nuclear power or not. That is the sovereign decision of each individual country.

The IAEA's role is to offer extensive services to countries that do decide to use nuclear power to help them do so safely, securely and sustainably.

As the use of nuclear power grows in the coming decades, international cooperation will become even more important. The IAEA is where much of that cooperation takes place. We play the central role in

bringing together both governments and technical experts in the nuclear field.

The IAEA's comprehensive body of nuclear safety standards is a key element of the global nuclear safety regime. We help to ensure that global best practices are shared. This also helps to enhance public confidence in the safety of nuclear power.

To be effective, safety standards must be properly applied in practice. I encourage all countries to fully implement IAEA safety standards.

We also offer a broad range of peer review missions, which bring together experts from the IAEA, and from Member States, to examine the safety of a country's nuclear power plants, or the effectiveness of its regulators – as well as in many other areas.

Everyone benefits. Even countries with the most advanced technologies and safety systems find they can gain new insights from experts from other countries. I invite all countries to make full use of the services of the IAEA.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Since the Fukushima Daiichi accident, Japan has made important changes to its regulatory framework and worked closely with the IAEA and with other international partners.

A new independent regulatory body, the Nuclear Regulation Authority, has been established.

It has integrated roles and responsibilities that were assigned to different government organizations before the accident. New national regulatory requirements are now in place.

Japan has been making good use of IAEA expert peer review missions.

An IAEA Integrated Regulatory Review Service mission is expected to take place towards the end of this year. It will assess the status of the national regulatory infrastructure against IAEA safety standards.

A number of missions have already taken place to review decommissioning activities at the Fukushima Daiichi site and remediation efforts in the surrounding areas.

Japan has also invited IAEA missions to review the operational safety of its reactors and its nuclear security arrangements.

Japan has ratified the Amendment to the *Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material*, and joined the *Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage*.

Through its cooperation with the IAEA, Japan not only benefits from international best practice and the insights of leading world experts. It also shares its own considerable expertise in all areas of nuclear science and technology with the rest of the world. This is a two-way process.

Many talented Japanese engineers and scientists work at the IAEA, or take part in IAEA activities in nuclear energy and nuclear safety, and in a wide range of applications of nuclear technology. Japan has much to contribute. I hope that many Japanese experts will consider spending at least part of their careers working internationally.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Before concluding, let me briefly mention another important area of the IAEA's activities, namely the use of nuclear technology in areas other than power.

Many countries are interested in peaceful uses of nuclear technology in cancer treatment, industrial applications, food production and water management, for example.

The IAEA is making nuclear science and technology available for developing countries in these areas.

For many developing countries, the transfer of nuclear technology is the most important thing we do. The IAEA's mandate has been summarized as *Atoms for Peace*. Today, I feel that our mandate could be better understood as *Atoms for Peace and Development*.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In your meetings today and tomorrow, I expect that you will cover many of the issues I have raised.

I am sure many valuable suggestions will be made on how nuclear safety can continuously be improved, so that this remarkable technology can continue to benefit humankind.

I look forward to learning about the outcome of your deliberations and I wish you every success with your conference.

Thank you.