

IAEA EIGHTEENTH GENERAL CONFERENCE  
STATEMENT IN PLENARY BY H.E. J. ALAN BEESLEY  
DELEGATE OF CANADA

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Mr. President, may I begin by congratulating you upon your well deserved election to the high office you occupy. Speaking as late as I am in this debate, I am able to attest to your skill and wisdom in discharging your duties as President of the Conference.

May I take this opportunity of congratulating our fellow Commonwealth nation, Mauritius, on joining us in membership in the Agency. I would also like to welcome the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, whose admission will, I feel certain, further contribute to the fulfilment of the principle of universality in the Agency and the United Nations and to peaceful relations between North and South Korea.

I should like also to pay tribute to the Director General for the leadership he has asserted during the very eventful twelve-month period since our last General Conference. He has responded to a whole series of new challenges by constructive initiatives reflecting vigour, courage and good judgment, and I pledge Canada's full support to him in the carrying out of his complex, heavy and important responsibilities.

Since the last General Conference of the Agency, Mr. President, nuclear power appears to have reached a

crossroads. On the one hand a critical situation in the availability of fossil fuels has suddenly made the economics of nuclear power far more attractive to many countries. On the other, the optimism which this vigorous new demand would justify is clouded by a number of concerns.

In his extremely thoughtful and stimulating statement the Director General has highlighted several of these areas of concern directly related to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy -- namely, (1) the safety of nuclear power systems; (2) waste management; (3) the physical security of fissionable material; (4) the problem of nuclear proliferation; and (5) the needs of developing countries. I propose now to offer some observations on each of these five issues which the Director General has rightly identified.

Canada has already made clear that it welcomes the praiseworthy initiative of the Secretariat in connection with the expanded program in the field of power reactor safety and environmental protection and supports the increased emphasis to be placed on these activities in the Agency's work. Because the development of nuclear power is inevitably going to accelerate rapidly in the coming years, there is not much time left in which to pursue the development of adequate international standards, codes and guidelines for the safety of nuclear power reactors. Much extremely useful

work has already been done by the Agency, and this is a cause for <sup>some</sup> satisfaction, but a great deal remains to be done in this field in the next few years to enable all countries using and planning for nuclear power reactors to have access to an adequate set of safety standards and guidelines as well as the necessary expertise.

My country will assist by providing some cost-free experts for the working groups and for review and advisory committees. We believe it to be important that the resulting documents take into account contributions from all countries which have already given detailed consideration to these matters.

Closely related to the question of power reactor safety and environmental protection is that of waste management. My Government welcomes the fact that the Agency has already begun to discharge its responsibilities under the London Ocean Dumping Convention by preparing, albeit only in provisional form at this stage, the definition of wastes that are not to be permitted to be dumped into the world's oceans and initial recommendations establishing the constraints that are to apply on any dumping below the prohibited levels. Clearly, <sup>here too</sup> a great deal of further scientific work remains to be done on the Provisional Definition and Recommendations before they reach final form, and we are confident that the Agency will continue to discharge its major responsibilities under this important environmental treaty with great care and thoroughness.

Mr. President, we fully agree with the Director General's indication that the Agency's work in the field of waste management will require intensified efforts in the coming years because of the rapid expansion of nuclear power. We also were impressed by the statement by the Delegate of Japan, who pointed to the urgent need for an international code of guidelines relating to the management of radioactive wastes. We are inclined to agree with the Japanese view that environmental standards for the appropriate disposition of such wastes should not be left exclusively to individual countries. In our view, anticipated growth of nuclear power requires adequate efforts and measures not only at the national level, as at present, but also at the international level to ensure that this growth does not imply any threat to man or his environment and that adequate techniques of long-term waste management are developed as a matter of the highest priority.

It is now Canadian policy to require new waste management sites to be designed so that containers of radioactivity can be retrieved if desired. Permanent disposal is not at present contemplated for such sites nor have we permitted dumping of radioactive waste at sea. We believe many years of study will be required before significant amounts of radioactivity can be disposed of permanently with adequate assurances of safety for geologic times.

This same expansion of nuclear facilities also carries with it serious risks of misappropriation and abuse of fissionable material. Accordingly, my Delegation fully agrees with the suggestion of the Director General that the time has come to examine the possibility of an international agreement on the implementation of standards for the physical protection of nuclear material. We wish to associate ourselves with Delegations such as those of the USA, the Federal Republic of Germany and the Netherlands which have called for careful study of this area. This problem, like others already discussed, requires coordinated action both at the national and international level. We believe that the most useful course might be for the Agency to convene a panel of experts which might begin where the Agency's useful publication, "Recommendations for the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials", leaves off -- that is, with an examination of how an adequate international implementation of these recommendations, as well as others which may have to be developed, can be encouraged.

I said at the beginning of my remarks that the spread of nuclear energy has been clouded by a number of concerns. One of these is a very grave concern indeed. Recent events have reminded us only too vividly of the present unsatisfactory situation with regard to measures preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. In one sense, Mr. President, I am inclined to agree with the criticism expressed by the Delegate of France of drawing undue satisfaction from the Agency's statistics of

...agreements entered into and the amount of produced material subject to safeguards. Such statistics, even though they indicate encouraging progress, should not blind us to a major set back.

Mr. President, my Government is one of many gravely concerned by the explosion of a nuclear device in May of this year by India. In the words of the Director General, "a barrier to proliferation has been breached". We have heard the statement of the Indian Delegate affirming the peaceful purposes of the explosion; and that India has committed no breach of any treaty in conducting this nuclear explosion. There is a fundamental difference of interpretation between India and Canada on this latter question -- and I refer now to the Treaty interpretation issue and not the question of intent -- since it is impossible from a technical point of view to distinguish between peaceful and military explosive devices.

Canada is opposed to any proliferation of nuclear explosive capability regardless of the purpose intended. Indeed, the prevention of proliferation must, in the view of the Canadian Government, be a first priority of the world community. We concur fully with the Director General that it will require more than words to regain the lost momentum.

A number of Delegates have drawn attention to the importance of a more widespread ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty as the best means of attaining this vital objective. We fully share this view and we will bend every effort to this end. We agree also, however, with the complementary point made by the Director General that "a more widespread acceptance of the Non-Proliferation Treaty will depend in the first place on the determination of depository governments".

We associate ourselves completely with the Director General in urging depositories to continue their efforts for implementation of Article VI. A number of Delegates have drawn attention to the interrelationship of concrete measures towards disarmament and arms control by nuclear powers and the danger of the proliferation of nuclear weapons which could follow from the continued inaction of the nuclear powers.

Inaction on the part of the nuclear powers does not, however, relieve the rest of us from our responsibility to contribute to a peaceful world by preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Canada, for its own part, as one of the first countries in the world to possess the nuclear technology which could have led to a nuclear explosive capability, nevertheless has long since made clear its position of principle--reflected in its ratification of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and its support of the IAEA safeguards system--that in the common interest, and thus in our own self-interest, we must together renounce the nuclear weapons option. The alternative<sup>as we see it</sup> is an inevitable process of nuclear proliferation and an exponential increase in the dangers of nuclear warfare. It is encouraging at least that while views may differ concerning the merits or demerits of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, we have heard no statements advocating nuclear weapons proliferation and we have heard many opposing it.

Mr. President, the Director General spoke for many members of this Agency when he declared, "It is essential that major industrial countries, both nuclear-weapon-states and non-nuclear-weapon states, reaffirm by deed as well as by word the importance they attach to the Non-Proliferation Treaty". Parties to the Treaty, and perhaps other interested states too, will have such an opportunity next May at the Review Conference in Geneva and it is profoundly to be hoped that they will make the very most of this opportunity to strengthen the non-proliferation system.

However this last year has not been without significance in terms of positive developments relating to effective international safeguards and the non-proliferation system. The Board of Governors approved last February, and reaffirmed on September 13, guidelines to the Director General consisting of principles reflecting the need to ensure that safeguards agreements under INFCIRC 66 Rev.2 are uniformly adequate in terms of the duration of safeguards in relation to the life of the facility concerned.

Moreover, on August 22 a group of major supplier states informed the Director General, and through him all members of the Agency, of their collective resolve to <sup>require,</sup> as a condition of supply, Agency safeguards on nuclear material and designated non-nuclear



material and equipment and upon the preclusion of the diversion of produced material to any nuclear explosive purpose. My country is gratified to have been a full participant in this important undertaking. The Director General/<sup>of course</sup> is quite correct in observing that this step was useful in ensuring that effective safeguards are not impaired by commercial considerations. But it was much more than that; it constituted an attempt to ensure that effective implementation of one of the most critical aspects of the non-proliferation system, Article 3.2 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The agreed conclusions of the suppliers group have been reported to all members of the Agency in document INFCIRC/209, which was issued very recently.

Moreover, the Board of Governors at its last meeting approved recommendations for procedures for the Agency to use in responding to requests for services in connection with the use for engineering applications of nuclear explosive devices and a resolution enabling the Director General to make adequate staffing arrangements when the need arises.

While these developments constitute most significant achievements, it must be accepted that a great deal of work remains to be done to ensure that international cooperation in the supply of nuclear materials, equipment and technology is subject to

adequate guarantees concerning their exclusively peaceful use. My Government indicated in unequivocal terms its view as to the approach to be followed with respect to areas that remain to be dealt with when it informed the June meeting of the Board of Governors that, for its part, Canada wished to make clear that it interprets its NPT obligations as precluding it from making nuclear material, equipment and engineering services available to non - Non-Proliferation Treaty parties which could be used for the development of a nuclear explosive device, in the absence of a satisfactory undertaking precluding their use in the development of such a device.

Having spoken ~~now~~ about safeguards, I propose to turn now to the related question of technical assistance and the financing of nuclear power in developing countries. It is no accident, Mr. President, that the question of safeguards and what might broadly be termed technical assistance are juxtaposed in this statement, for in our view they go hand in hand. I know of no more dangerous notion than the myth which can be found in the <sup>discussions</sup> ~~debates~~ of this organization that there is some kind of rivalry, some kind of incompatibility, in the programmes of the Agency between technical assistance and safeguards activities. Of course, the costs of safeguards are growing and are bound to continue to grow. But technical assistance and developing-country-oriented activities are also growing and must continue to grow.

Indeed, as the Delegate of the Federal Republic of Germany has pointed out, Document GOV/INF/278 makes clear that fully one half of total funds available to the Agency are spent on projects of immediate interest to developing countries. --and rightly so. These funds include not only the voluntary General Fund and funds made available by UNDP, but also gifts in kind and part of the Regular Budget itself. As noted by the Delegate of the Federal Republic of Germany, the other half of the total funds available benefits all members including developing countries. It is encouraging that the preferential system of financing safeguards expenses ensures that these costs do not constitute an undue burden for developing countries.

As we see it, safeguards, far from being a rival to technical assistance, constitute a necessary condition for facilitating international cooperation in the nuclear field, since all responsible nations will wish to ensure that the technical assistance they provide multilaterally and bilaterally in the field of nuclear energy is subject to adequate guarantees of peaceful uses.

The Director General and several Delegates have rightly drawn our attention to the fact that rapidly escalating oil prices, while increasing the need for nuclear power in certain developing countries, have drastically aggravated their balance of payments difficulties. We therefore welcome indications that the Agency is

actively pursuing contacts with the World Bank and that the Bank's attitude is increasingly positive concerning nuclear power financing. The dimension of the capital requirements for enhanced nuclear power in developing countries is such that international facilities on the scale of the World Bank and its related institutions will have to play a much greater role in order to enable the sharing of nuclear energy in a more equitable way. We also expect, as a major contributor to UNDP, that in coming years the developing countries themselves will wish to assign a much higher priority to nuclear energy projects in the country programming system of UNDP and that greater resources may be made available for projects in the nuclear field to be executed by the Agency.

While it is clear that the financing of nuclear power in developing countries lies beyond the resources or the statutory responsibilities of the Agency, in the Canadian view the IAEA has an important role to play in assisting developing countries in obtaining access to existing sources of major financing. We also continue to believe that the Agency should and will be able to provide increasing assistance to developing countries in the coming years through many of its programmes under the Regular Budget, such as the expanded safety programme, of which the developing countries will be the chief but by no means the only beneficiaries, and through its voluntary technical assistance fund.

Accordingly, we intend to increase substantially our contribution to the General Fund for next year and have supported the 50 per cent increase in target for that Fund which has been proposed by the Board of Governors.

May I conclude by expressing our appreciation to Mr. Goswami for the years of service, on behalf of all of us, for we all have a vital interest in ensuring expansion of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. He typifies the best traditions of the Agency in his dedication, his hard work, his expertise, his wisdom and his awareness of the special role of the Secretariat in faithfully and patiently pursuing the often difficult path of international cooperation in the common good. We shall miss him. We have no doubt, however, that the principles he has exemplified will continue on in the capable hands of his colleagues in the Secretariat under the leadership of the Director General.

We all appreciate, I have no doubt, that the accelerated development of the peaceful uses of nuclear energy in both developed and developing countries will present complex, difficult and urgent problems. It is precisely because of the vital nature of these problems and issues that the international community has a need for an organization such as this Agency to provide a

forum for seeking solutions and a mechanism for implementing those solutions internationally. I believe that an organization which produced the international safeguards system--a system of control and inspection which is unique in the history of international cooperation--should be able to grapple successfully with the major problems which now confront it.