



Permanent Mission of
Malaysia
to the United Nations

Statement by H.E. Mr. Hamidon Ali
Permanent Representative of Malaysia to the United Nations
on Agenda Item 81: Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency
at the Plenary of the 61st Session of the General Assembly
New York, Monday, 30 October 2006

I join others in thanking Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), for his presentation to the General Assembly of the annual report of the Agency for 2005. It was a year of notable success for the Agency in its efforts to ensure that the benefits of nuclear technology were shared globally for economic and social development. My delegation commends the excellent work and efforts of the Agency, under the dynamic leadership of Mr. ElBaradei, in fulfilling its mandate during the period under review.

2. Malaysia recognizes the value of nuclear technology for the achievement of sustainable development and the process of nation-building and the role played by the Agency in that regard. We reaffirm our support for the Agency in its mission to promote and facilitate the development of nuclear technology for peaceful uses, as embodied in Article II of its Statute. In this connection, the Technical Cooperation Programme of the Agency remains a crucial component of its mandate and activities. Malaysia is both a donor and a recipient of this Programme and we commend the Department of Technical Cooperation of the IAEA for its continuous efforts in discharging its statutory mandate for the benefit of recipient Member States as well as for its creditable achievements.

3. The Director General of the IAEA had, during his opening statement at the 50th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference, identified three distinct phases, namely the establishment of mechanisms for assurances of supply of fuel for nuclear power plants as the first phase, the development of assurances of supply for the acquisition of nuclear power reactors as the second phase, and the conversion of existing uranium enrichment and spent nuclear fuel reprocessing facilities from national to multilateral operations as the third phase.

4. While we support such a move towards improving assurances of supply in the field of nuclear power generation technology, while also reducing the risks of further proliferation of sensitive technologies that can be used in the development of nuclear weapons, it should not, by any means, lead to any unilateral adoption of a norm that will affect the fundamental inalienable rights of the States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to engage in research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes without discrimination. Such a move should also not distract global attention away from the obligations of nuclear-weapon States to undertake to pursue negotiations in good faith, on effective measures relating to the cessation of the nuclear arms race at an early date, and to nuclear disarmament. Despite the overwhelming global attention on nuclear non-proliferation, Malaysia remains firmly convinced that the pursuit of a general, complete and irreversible nuclear disarmament under strict and effective international control is the most effective way of removing the threat of nuclear weapons proliferation.

5. Nevertheless, my delegation believes that such a multilateral approach to the nuclear fuel cycle should provide a more economically attractive option for developing countries embarking on a nuclear power generation programme, particularly for those countries with a relatively small nuclear power programme involving only a handful of nuclear power plants.

6. Malaysia also believes that the strengthening of the existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and the establishment of new nuclear-weapon-free zones in all regions of the world, on the basis of arrangement freely arrived at among the States of the region concerned, constitute a positive step towards attaining the objective of global nuclear disarmament.

7. In this regard, Malaysia welcomes the signing of the Treaty on a Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone in Central Asia by the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan in Semipalatinsk on 8 September 2006. Malaysia considers the establishment of this newest nuclear-weapon-free zone an effective contribution to strengthening regional and global peace and security, and urges the nuclear-weapon States to provide unconditional assurances against the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons on all the States of that zone.

8. In that connection also, Malaysia reiterates its call for a prompt establishment of a similar nuclear-weapon-free zone in the Middle East, in accordance with Security Council Resolution 487 and 687, and other relevant General Assembly resolutions adopted by consensus. Malaysia calls upon Israel to promptly place all of its nuclear facilities under IAEA full-scope safeguards in accordance with the same Security Council Resolution 487.

9. Closer to home, my delegation remains concerned over the continued unwillingness of a majority of the nuclear-weapon States to sign the Protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear Weapon-Free Zone (SEANWFZ), which was signed by all ten Member States of the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1995.

10. On the issue of nuclear security, Malaysia appreciates the high premium placed by the global community on this issue, in view of the serious threats of mass transnational terrorism, including that of nuclear and radiological terrorism. However, this has led to the development of a multitude of overlapping initiatives by a number of international organizations, including the IAEA, in this same area. Such overlapping nuclear and other related international security initiatives have since imposed a heavy burden on the work of the relevant government agencies, as well as posed new challenges to interagency coordination in Member States.

11. In order to optimise the utilisation of resources, and also ensure effective interagency coordination between the responsible authorities in Member States, my delegation calls upon the IAEA to coordinate the implementation of its nuclear security initiatives with that of other relevant multilateral organizations, especially within the framework of the United Nations, such as between the IAEA and the Counter-Terrorism Executive Directorate (CTED) of the United Nations Security Council. This is imperative, since different international organisations have different counterpart agencies in the Member States.

12. On the implementation of NPT Safeguards Agreement with the Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia again reiterates its recognition of the IAEA as the sole competent authority for the verification of the safeguards obligations of that country and other Member States, and further stresses that there should be no undue pressure or interference in the activities of the IAEA in this regard, particularly on verification, which could jeopardise its efficiency and credibility. While Malaysia took note of the assessment of the IAEA Director-General that all nuclear material declared by Iran had been accounted for, we nevertheless encourage Iran to urgently continue to cooperate actively and fully with the IAEA, within the Agency's mandate, in order to resolve the outstanding issues towards the promotion of confidence and a peaceful resolution of the issue.

13. Turning to the issue on the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK), Malaysia deplores the nuclear test, which the DPRK claimed it had conducted on 9 October 2006. Malaysia believes that the test is a serious setback to efforts aimed at keeping the region and the world free from nuclear weapons. It could also trigger an arms race in the region. Therefore, we call on the DPRK to cease developing its capability to produce nuclear weapons and return to the moratorium on nuclear testing. We also strongly believe that the continued existence of nuclear weapons presents a grave threat to humanity, particularly by increasing the risk of proliferation. We, therefore, reiterate the importance of achieving the universal goal of complete and general disarmament. Malaysia urges all countries in the region to exercise maximum restraint and refrain from actions that could further heighten tension in the region. In this context, Malaysia further urges all parties concerned to return to the Six-Party Talks and resume negotiations with a view to resolve all outstanding issues amicably.

14. Finally, Malaysia would like to express once again its appreciation to Mr. Mohamed ElBaradei, Director General of the IAEA, as well as to the IAEA Secretariat for their significant and valuable work in fulfilling the three pillars of the Agency's mandate. Malaysia pledges its full support to the IAEA, as one of the organizations of the United Nations system, to continue to uphold and maintain its central and universal role in addressing the enormous challenges ahead.

Thank you.