



STATEMENT OF THE G77 AND CHINA DURING THE FOURTH MEETING OF THE INFORMAL OPEN-ENDED PROCESS OF MEMBER STATES TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE IAEA, DELIVERED BY ARGENTINA ON 21 MAY 2009

Madam Chair,

The points raised in the Group's statements during the previous three sessions under the general discussion and the discussions regarding the role of the Agency in promoting nuclear science and technology remain relevant.

The Group highly appreciates the Agency's efforts to support nuclear safety worldwide. As stated on several occasions, the Group attaches great importance to the issue of nuclear safety, which constitutes one of the key elements of any nuclear programme, and believes that the Agency plays an important role in this field, as provided for in Article III of the Statute. The Group would like to highlight that nuclear safety has remained at a high level in recent years.

The Group recognizes that as the uses and the introduction of nuclear technologies expand, vigilance and concrete actions to enhance nuclear safety must continue. However, the Group stresses that the primary responsibility for nuclear safety and security rests entirely with the State. The Group also reiterates its position that nuclear safety and security considerations should not be used to hamper research on and utilization of nuclear technology for peaceful uses.

Furthermore, the Group finds it necessary for the Agency to maintain an adequate balance between promotional activities, carried out through the Technical Cooperation Programme, and its other statutory activities. The Group stresses the need to strengthen TC activities and continuously enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the TCP in accordance with the requests and needs of Member States. The Group equally emphasizes that all measures taken and policies adopted in this regard should preserve and enhance the ownership of TC projects by recipient Member States. This national ownership can largely be undermined if the Agency tends to overemphasize nuclear safety and security.

Madam Chair,

The Group is concerned with the growing tendency by the Secretariat, upon the instance of Some Member States, to use the Agency's nonbinding guidelines as binding requirements dictating the policies that each and every Member State has to follow in its nuclear activities, especially those policies related to the launching or operating of nuclear power programmes.

The Group is of the view that overstressing the possible benefits of standardization of nuclear policies, particularly safety standards, in the case of countries that are considering launching or expanding their nuclear power programmes, or developing national capabilities related to the nuclear fuel cycle may undermine the credibility and efficiency of the Agency's activities in this area.

The Group calls for adequate internal coordination between the relevant departments of the Secretariat to ensure the full utilization of available resources and to avoid duplication of efforts under different programmatic activities.

The Group stresses the importance of seeking to guarantee that the vendors of any nuclear technologies undertake a responsibility to ensure that users have access to all information and resources necessary for safe operation, so that nuclear safety knowledge is transferred effectively.

Madam Chair,

The expanding involvement of the Secretariat, and the related utilization of resources, in the activities aiming at the promotion of certain parallel initiatives related to nuclear safety and security might need to be assessed and reviewed.

The Group reiterates that nuclear security is not a statutory function of the Agency and that the sole responsibility of implementing nuclear security measures rests in the hands of the Member States. Therefore, the Group believes that it is fully justifiable for the activities undertaken in the area of nuclear security to continue to be financed through voluntary and extrabudgetary resources.

Thank you Madam Chair.