



VIENNA CHAPTER

STATEMENT OF DR. MOHAMED ELBARADEI, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY (IAEA) during the 40th meeting of the G-77 Chapters in Vienna, 8-9 June 2006 - Verbatim transcript.

Chairman, distinguished colleagues and friends,

let me tell you how pleased I am to be with you today at this meeting with the chapters of G-77.

First of all, I am pleased to see that the meeting today is not just limited to G-77 countries but open to all members of the Organization.

That, to me is how we ought to be working. We are part of a system, we all share the same concerns and we need, if we want to succeed in achieving that objective of the G-77, to work together as partners and not as protagonists.

I think the meeting today is coming at a very difficult time when the community is very much polarized, as we see in New York, as we see in many parts of the world. It is also coming at the time when development is facing a serious challenge. I am sure I don't need to give you numbers, I am sure you all know that we still have two billions people leaving with less than 2 dollars a day. Twenty thousands people die every day because they are too poor to live. We still have 10 times more money spent on arms than on development assistance. So, we are facing a serious challenge in our efforts to develop a large majority of members of the international community. Even the concept of development probably needs to be redefined. We know there is an intrinsic link between development and peace and security. If I use numbers again, out of the 11 millions people who died in the last 10 years, 9 millions died in Sub-Saharan Africa. That is where the poorest of the poor live. There is a very clear linkage between development, armed conflicts, internal wars and civil strife. If you have a civil war, that clearly impacts on development.

I can mention Iraq, and Congo. In talking about development, we need to understand the intrinsic link between peace and security and development. Development supports peace and security and conditions of peace enhance development. That is something we must keep in mind as we go along. I think a key challenge for you is to identify your priorities within the system.

How can the UN system help you with achieving your priorities? As priorities differ between one group and another within the G-77, it is important that we have a common priority that extends across the system, not only in Vienna, but also in Geneva, in New York, everywhere.

What are really the most important priorities? How do we define these priorities and how we coordinate the implementation of these priorities across the system? There is a lot of dealing, if you like, between Vienna, between Geneva, between New York. It is not different with governments. Government instructions in New York are probably slightly or quite different from Geneva or Vienna.

That is one of the issue we have always been facing. How to make sure that governments have the same priorities and that organizations have the same priorities? And how do we coordinate this?

And the third challenge if of course how to engage the system once you have defined your priorities, once you have coordinated your priorities? The system meaning not only the G-77, but also the rest of the international community. How to make sure that they buy into these priorities? That obviously requires a continuous dialogue. I think we would loose if we continue to say us versus them. I think we need to continue to look at the whole issue as partners.

As I said, if we understand and see it every day, the linkage between poverty, between infectious diseases, between armed conflicts, between weapons of mass destruction, we need to understand that every one of us, whether rich or poor, has a stake in making sure that we have an international system that cater to both peace and development and obviously including human rights and good governance. All this is a package that is very much linked together. And you cannot just separate water or energy from the rest of the priorities. All these priorities are everybody's priorities. And that is also something we need to understand. Whether we are rich or poor, we need to make sure that we have enough money for development, we have enough mechanisms to resolve our issues through peaceful means, we have enough resources to make sure that we do not develop new weapons of terror.

We need to make sure that we have an equitable system for managing our international affairs. I think that that Chairman from New York mentioned their impasse with regard to the UN reform. That is a very distressful thing and frankly I see that to be a loose-loose situation for everybody. When the organization is completely at an impasse or have a budget only for six months, that is not how we are going to work, that is not how we are going to achieve our goals.

My colleagues here in Vienna, Deputy Director General Technical Cooperation, Ana María Cetto, our colleague from the Department of Nuclear Energy, Mr. Rogner, are going to give you in details what we do here in Vienna with regard to our mandate at the IAEA. Many of you probably don't know that we have a budget overall, say extrabudget and regular budget, around four hundred million dollars, split in half between development and regulatory activities. People are not aware of that because we always appear in the newspapers as whatever you call it watchdog, rabbit dog, but our work goes much beyond that, our work extends to making sure that nuclear energy is available for those who want to make use of it. Our work extends to making use of nuclear techniques in agriculture, health, water resource management, industry. We spend around 150 million dollars per year on these activities and our colleagues, I am sure, will give you concrete examples of where in certain situations we are the only 'game in town' if you like, for cancer treatment, which might surprise some of you, but we are the only ones in many developing countries who are providing

radiation therapy machines for treatment and diagnosis of cancer. We are very much at the forefront in developing new strains of rice for example. If you ask the Vietnamese farmers they will tell you that we are the ones who helped them to increase dramatically the yield of their rice production through developing new strains for instance. And so on, and so forth.

Again, it reflects what I have been saying, we need to work on both the issues of international security and peace but we also have to understand that without development, we will not achieve peace and security. We talk here about something like balance. We have to have our resources and focus on the different priorities. To me, balance is not as I have said before a dollar for a dollar. Balance to me is that we provide equal attention to all the priorities of all our Member States. No one's activity should be at the expense of other's activity. That has always been an issue of comprehension, particularly during the budget preparation. At least, unlike other organizations, I can tell you the good news that we usually adopt our budget by consensus. Last year we got a 10 per cent increase in our budget, and I think we are the only UN organization that managed to get 10 per cent. Simply, again, because Member States understood that our work has such an importance that they justified increasing our budget.

We need to understand that every Member State is going through very much budget restraints. I think every government is cutting budget whether it is rich or poor. And to be able to ask for increase it requires that you really have to make a very strong case and you have to show that the money they are paying to the organization is really of high priority that justify they will cut some social services or some other vital priority activities within their own domestic spending. That also requires obviously that we have to be very efficient.

Efficiency I think is a key. Again I am proud to tell you here that when we went through the UN reform list, we have discovered that we have already implemented most of it already ourselves without being asked by Member States. That is the way we see it, the reform has to come from within. We have initiated a reform for at least the last ten years since I have been around. I was very pleased with my colleagues to see that as I said, most of the reform process on the list of the UN have already been implemented. Maybe that is why also we are able to work in accordance with what you call the spirit of Vienna. It is rarely when we vote a particular resolution.

I don't want to take much more of your time but let me tell you that I am very happy that you are here. It is an honor to be with you today. I would like you to take this opportunity to really address some of the most difficult issues that we are facing, which is as I said how to engage the North to make sure that all our priorities are their priorities, how to identify our priorities in a very systematic and rigorous way and how to make sure that these priorities are coordinated across the system. And how to create a culture whereby we continue to work as partners as I said and not as adversaries. And even when we disagree we have to agree to disagree and be able to continue to work together because the sum of our work is much more important than the parts that constitute that work. The system is there to serve you, the system is there to be at your disposal, but we also need a lot of coordination between what we do and what you do at home.

A lot of our problems sometimes from our perspective is the lack of coordination at the local level. And that is something also you want to make sure that is there to be able to get the optimum value for your money. I am also conscious that we are here to give you value for your money. We are not here to keep it, to preach you or teach you but we are here to serve you as you created this institution and own it to you to give you the best value for you money.

I wish you again the best of success. We will continue to be working with you. Again I said North and South should work as partners and the same applies between international civil servants and Member States.

Again, I never use here the Secretariat versus Member States, I always say that we are in the same boat. If we succeed, we will succeed together and if we fail, all of us will fail. That is it the spirit which I hope will continue to be here at this meeting, and anything my colleagues or myself can do to make your meeting successful I will be happy to oblige.