

PM's statement at Plenary of NSS

March 27, 2012

Your Excellency President Lee Myung-bak,

Distinguished Heads of Delegations,

I would like to join others in thanking President Lee Myung-bak for hosting this Summit and for the excellent arrangements made.

India fully shares global concerns on nuclear terrorism and clandestine proliferation, which continue to pose serious threats to international security. At the same time, given India's growing energy demands, we see nuclear energy as an essential component of our energy mix. Strengthening nuclear security, therefore, assists India's objective of promoting a safe and secure expansion of civil nuclear energy. We must continue to harness the numerous developmental benefits that nuclear science and technology offer, especially for developing countries.

We are in the process of expanding our nuclear energy generation to 62,000 MWs by 2032. We are taking forward our three stage nuclear programme based on a closed fuel cycle, with new safety features and proliferation-resistant technologies.

We are also determined that our expanded nuclear power programme will follow the highest standards of nuclear safety and security, whose synergy is essential to restore public faith in nuclear energy, especially after the tragic events at Fukushima.

We have undertaken comprehensive reviews of nuclear safety measures at our nuclear facilities. India has invited the Operational Safety Review Teams of the IAEA to assist in its own safety reviews and audit. Nuclear safety evaluations are being put in the public domain to enhance transparency and boost public confidence. We are also in the process of setting up a statutory, independent and autonomous Nuclear Safety Regulatory Authority. We are strengthening emergency preparedness and response to nuclear accidents.

Nuclear terrorism will remain a potent threat as long as there are terrorists seeking to gain access to nuclear material and technologies for malicious purposes. India is acutely conscious of this threat. Our resolution at the General Assembly on measures to deny terrorists access to weapons of mass destruction has been adopted by consensus since 2002.

We support the extension of UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and the work of its Committee and we intend to host a 1540 Workshop during this year to strengthen its implementation.

India is party to the main international legal instruments on nuclear security - the Convention on Physical Protection and its 2005 amendment, as well as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We support the universalization of these instruments.

Nuclear security is primarily a national responsibility but there are benefits to be gained by supplementing responsible national actions through sustained and effective international cooperation.

The Washington Communiqué and Work Plan set in place new benchmarks on nuclear security and new frameworks for international cooperation. We welcome the fact that this Summit will expand the scope of such cooperation by greater focus on minimization of High Enriched Uranium, information and transport security, nuclear forensics, preventing illicit nuclear trafficking, assistance for updating national regulations and building capacity for nuclear security.

India has contributed actively to the Nuclear Security Summit process, including by hosting a Sherpa meeting in New Delhi in January this year.

We have made good progress in the establishment of the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership, which I

announced at the Washington Summit. The physical infrastructure for the Centre is being set up. We have commenced 'off-campus' courses. Such courses will be held more frequently in the future. We have signed documents for cooperation on the Global Centre with the United States of America, Russia, France and the IAEA.

India is expanding its technical assistance to developing countries, including by providing our indigenously developed Cobalt teletherapy machines – Bhabhatrons - for cancer treatment.

The IAEA has a central role in strengthening the international global nuclear security architecture. I am happy to announce that India will contribute 1 million US dollars to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund for the years 2012-13.

India will participate in the Agency's 2013 international coordinating conference of various nuclear security activities, including the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Global Partnership.

The best guarantee for nuclear security is a world free from nuclear weapons. Our former Prime Minister, Mr. Rajiv Gandhi, put forward an Action Plan for global nuclear disarmament in a time-bound framework almost 25 years ago. This remains the most comprehensive and elaborate proposal to achieve this objective.

Attaining the goal of a nuclear weapon-free world will require commitments embedded in an agreed multilateral framework involving all states possessing nuclear weapons. This should include measures to reduce nuclear dangers by reducing the salience of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and by increasing universal restraints on the first use of nuclear weapons.

We also support the early commencement of negotiations on a Fissile Material Cut-off Treaty in the Conference of Disarmament in Geneva.

India has never been a source of proliferation of sensitive technologies and we are determined to further strengthen our export control systems to keep them on par with the highest international standards. We have already adhered to the guidelines of the NSG and MTCR. As a like-minded country with the ability and willingness to promote global non-proliferation objectives, we believe that the next logical step is India's membership of the four export control regimes.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate India's commitment to strengthen and improve further the effectiveness of its nuclear safety and security systems and make a significant contribution to the enhancement of the global nuclear security architecture.

Thank you.

Seoul
March 27, 2012