
Statement by Mr. Kwaku Aning
Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation

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Distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

I am pleased to speak to you this morning as the third INPRO Dialogue Forum on Nuclear Energy Innovations comes to a close. The meeting has brought together 63 participants from 38 countries, including 14 cost-free experts. As I noted in my address to the 17th meeting of the INPRO Steering Committee in May, the Dialogue Forum contributes directly to building the technical capability of developing countries that are interested in nuclear power programmes, and provides a unique forum for the exchange of information and expertise among participating countries actively involved in nuclear power planning.

Current energy planning scenarios foresee a doubling of energy demand in the next 50 years, mostly due to the increasing energy needs of developing countries. Despite the tragic accident at Fukushima Daichii following the catastrophic tsunami, interest in the nuclear power option remains steady in many States, and nuclear power will remain part of the global energy mix for a long time. It is therefore highly important that the specific needs of developing countries are considered in the development of future reactor and fuel cycle concepts from the very beginning. At the same time, developing countries need to acquire the technical capacity to independently evaluate different nuclear technologies and design choices and to be able to provide detailed design requirements.

The INPRO Dialogue Forum is designed to respond to these critical needs. It is open to all IAEA Member States, and has involved a variety of stakeholders, including governments, national and international organizations, regulators, vendors, operators and researchers. Open discussions between technology developers and users at an early stage of development of nuclear energy systems and facilitates the harmonization of practices, the establishment of strategic partnerships and the future deployment of
innovative nuclear energy systems. The level of participation at this meeting underscores once again the usefulness of the Forum as an arena for exchanging information between all stakeholders.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This Dialogue Forum is organized as part of the IAEA’s technical cooperation programme under the interregional project INT/4/142, ‘Promoting Technology Development and Application of Future Nuclear Energy Systems in Developing Countries’, and is the third and final Forum envisaged under the project. In the first Forum, in February 2010, participants considered the socio- and macroeconomic factors that influence decisions regarding the deployment of nuclear systems, and recommended the development of a methodology to assess the maturity of innovative nuclear technologies. The Forum recognised the value of regional and international approaches to issues such as fuel supply and waste management, and encouraged continued dialogue on the harmonization of safety in the areas of basic concepts, regulatory issues and implementation.

The second Forum, held in October last year, addressed multilateral approaches to nuclear energy deployment with a focus on institutional challenges. Participants agreed that the IAEA plays an important role in this by facilitating the development of strategic partnerships and exchange of information, establishing the necessary standards, facilitating harmonization and addressing the needs of developing countries, as well as ensuring access to technology.

This particular Forum has concentrated on the discussion of developing country user considerations for small and medium sized reactors – or SMRs – in light of the conclusions reached in the study ‘Common User Considerations (CUC) by Developing Countries for Future Nuclear Energy Systems’ and recent developments in SMR technologies. Input has also been sought from developed countries that are considering the deployment of SMRs for specialized applications. A key area of the Dialogue has been the consideration of desired features for the SMRs in separate thematic sessions covering economics and financing; infrastructure; nuclear safety; environment; proliferation resistance; physical protection; deployment; nuclear fuel and waste management.
The Forum discussion has helped build understanding about the possible role of SMRs in a country’s energy mix, and about the technical requirements of newcomer countries, as well as their current and projected energy demand and supply scenario. It is important to highlight that since some innovative SMRs contain a certain degree of ‘first-of-kind’ engineering systems and components, licensing and regulatory issues must be addressed. Common challenges for all are post-Fukushima action items that should address design, safety, institutional issues, and, most importantly, public acceptance.

Ladies and gentlemen,

A new project to continue the good work of INT/4/142 has been proposed for extrabudgetary funding under the 2012–2013 TC programme cycle. This is intended to support capacity building in long-range strategic nuclear energy planning for global sustainability. It will complement IAEA support to newcomer countries under the Milestones approach, which supports the establishment of a country’s first nuclear power plant by fostering capacity building in long-range strategic planning and sustaining global dialogue on nuclear energy in the 21st century. As this INPRO Dialogue Forum comes to an end, I would like to congratulate you on what you have achieved so far, and on the good will and spirit of common purpose that has been evident throughout the cycle of meetings.

Thank you.