

5th INPRO Dialogue Forum on Global Nuclear Energy Sustainability Long-term Prospects for Nuclear Energy in the post-Fukushima Era

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27 August 2012

Seoul, Republic of Korea

Honorable Mr. Alexander Bychkov, Deputy Director General of the IAEA,
Mr. Youn Ho Jung, president of the Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI),
Distinguished delegates; ladies and gentlemen,

On behalf of the Korean government, I would like to extend our warmest welcome to all of you gathered today and to extend my wholehearted congratulations on hosting the “Dialogue Forum on the Long-term Prospects for Nuclear Energy in the Post-Fukushima Era.” I am personally delighted to be here today at this important meeting. I am also pleased to note that this the first time that an INPRO Dialogue Forum has been held outside of the IAEA headquarters.

Nuclear energy stands at a critical crossroads. The Fukushima accident of last year created a lot of worry and concerns regarding nuclear safety, and for this reason, some countries are reconsidering their utilization of nuclear energy.

However, there is no denying that nuclear energy is the most practical energy alternative when considering our ever-increasing energy demands, the depletion of fossil fuels, and climate change.

To ensure the sustainability of nuclear energy, pressing issues such as safety, the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste, and public acceptance should be addressed.

In particular, after the Fukushima accident, it has become more evident than ever that our future utilization of nuclear energy may become impossible without the guarantee of nuclear safety.

In this context, this forum has a significant meaning in that it provides a platform to review the long-term perspectives of nuclear energy at the global level after the Fukushima accident, and to discuss sustainability of nuclear energy.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This is also an exceptionally important meaning, as it represents a good opportunity to seek desirable directions for future nuclear systems, and to seek the best ways for the introduction of new nuclear power plants, with technology holders and potential technology users participating together at this discussion platform.

The value of this forum is worth noting, as many stakeholders from government authorities, regulatory bodies, operators, local and international organizations, and research institutes are concurrently participating.

I hope that practical and feasible methods for the sustainability of nuclear energy from 21st century global perspectives will be drawn out through this forum.

Korea is concentrating its resources on securing reliable nuclear safety that the public can trust, the development of radiation medicine for overcoming incurable cancers and the consistent utilization and diversification of nuclear energy on the premise that the highest level of nuclear safety is guaranteed. Korea is also strengthening its international role as an advanced nuclear country, streamlining its nuclear R&D systems, and improving human resource development to realize Korea's goal of becoming a world-class role model for nuclear energy through the 4th Comprehensive Nuclear Energy Promotion Plan.

Korea will also render its support to IAEA endeavors for the expanded utilization of nuclear energy, and is committed to sparing no effort in providing human and financial resource support for the advancement of INPRO activities, such as the development of an innovative reactor and fuel cycles, as well as infrastructure development.

In conclusion, I would like to express my appreciation to all of the staff members from the IAEA INPRO Group, the Department of Technical Cooperation, and KAERI for their valuable efforts in preparing for this event. I wish this forum all success.

Thank you very much.