

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS)

The Future of Nuclear Energy Post-Fukushima

Speaker: Mr Yukiya Amano

Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Friday 8th February 2013 17:30 – 18.30

Response: Noel Stott, Senior Research Fellow, ISS

Thank you, Anton. I thought I would just add to Jakkie's remarks about what we, at ISS do in this area and then ask Mr Amano the first question.

Our Weapons of Mass Destruction project or more accurately titled 'Africa's Development and the Threat of Weapons of Mass Destruction' project aims to enhance Africa's role in international efforts to strengthen disarmament and non-proliferation in the context of Africa's developmental and security imperatives. Thematically the project engages with the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty; the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba); the Biological and Toxin Weapons Convention; the Chemical Weapons Convention; and relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions such as UNSCR 1540.

We pursue this by:

- Supporting and facilitating the implementation of WMD disarmament and non-proliferation initiatives at the African local, national, regional and continental levels, and sharing the lessons from these efforts with the international community;
- Collecting, analysing and distributing information that will influence the formulation and implementation of disarmament and non-proliferation policies, activities and legislation at the national level in Africa and beyond;
- Providing capacity building and training to appropriate stakeholders in African States.

We have for example, a MoU with the Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa (FNRBA) in order to assist them in developing the capacity of their members to enhance security in the nuclear facilities they manage, including ways to prevent armed non-state actors and other unauthorised individuals and organisations from gaining access to sensitive nuclear material or radioactive sources and equipment. For this reason, we have submitted an abstract of a paper for the IAEA to consider for presentation at its International Conference on Nuclear Security: Enhancing Global Efforts, in Vienna in July. The Conference will not only provide a timely global forum in which the progress made in strengthening nuclear security worldwide can be reviewed and future developments discussed, but its results will also serve as important input in the preparation of the next IAEA Nuclear Security Plan for 2014–2017. We hope that this process will result in an inclusive international nuclear security framework that will create the appropriate opportunities for developing countries to gain access to nuclear technology if they so choose.

2013 is potentially a significant year for the disarmament and non-proliferation community. If just one of the world's 19,000 nuclear weapons were detonated, be it intentionally or accidentally, not only would it kill thousands of people instantly, but, as the International Committee of the Red Cross has concluded, first responders would be unable to provide the emergency relief so urgently needed. This makes the continued existence and deployment of nuclear weapons one of the most serious humanitarian challenges of our time. We will therefore be participating in the Government of Norway's international conference on the humanitarian impact of nuclear weapons in Oslo from 4 – 5 March and the second session of the preparatory committee for the 2015 Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Review cycle will take place in Geneva in April and May.

We are also looking forward to the High-Level meeting of the General Assembly on nuclear disarmament on 26 September in New York, as well as the establishment within the Conference on Disarmament of an Open-ended Working Group that will hopefully move the international disarmament agenda forward.

Finally, another project that we are quietly working on with a London-based NGO called VERTIC – is to examine ways in which the IAEA could prepare for future verification challenges, reflecting the present debate on multilateral disarmament and mindful of the priorities identified by the 2010 Symposium on International Safeguards: Preparing for

Future Verification Challenges. We have taken our cue from the Treaty of Pelindaba which clear states that “Each Party undertakes ... [t]o permit the International Atomic Energy Agency ... and the Commission, that is AFCONE to verify the processes of dismantling and destruction of the nuclear explosive devices, as well as the destruction or conversion of the facilities for their production.”

We have also taken note of the views of member states that the IAEA should be involved in this task, as elaborated in the resolution ‘Strengthening the effectiveness and improving the efficiency of the safeguards system and application of the Model Additional Protocol’ (GC(56)/RES/13), which, in preambular paragraph (o), welcomes “the work the Agency has undertaken in verifying nuclear material from dismantled nuclear weapons.”

And now to my question:

Given the IAEA’s impartial nature, and given the positive role it had in verifying the nuclear weapon dismantlement processes in both South Africa and Libya, do you foresee a role in the future in monitoring and verifying nuclear disarmament by the current nuclear weapon states – which hopefully will happen in our life-time. Would the IAEA, as a nuclear centre of excellence, be part any prospective multilateral disarmament arrangement. Its never too early to start preparing the IAEA for such a task.

Thank you