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Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency

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Note by the Secretary-General

Owing to exceptional circumstances, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency was unable to deliver his annual statement on the report of the Agency to the General Assembly, as indicated in the note by the Secretary-General ([A/73/315](#)). The Secretary-General hereby transmits the prepared statement by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency introducing the report of the Agency at the seventy-third session of the General Assembly.



Statement of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency to the General Assembly at its seventy-third session

Let me begin by expressing my regret that I cannot be present for this seventy-third regular session of the United Nations General Assembly.

There have been important developments in many areas of the activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) since I last had the honour of addressing the General Assembly. Many of these are covered by the IAEA Annual Report 2017, which has been distributed.

The Agency now implements safeguards in 181 countries, helping to ensure that nuclear materials are not diverted from peaceful purposes. This is an important, and unique, contribution to international peace and security.

We have continued to verify and monitor the implementation by the Islamic Republic of Iran of its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is implementing its nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. It is essential that the Islamic Republic of Iran continues to fully implement those commitments.

The Agency continues to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material declared by the Islamic Republic of Iran under its Safeguards Agreement. Evaluations regarding the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in the country continue.

As far as the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is concerned, the country's nuclear activities are clear violations of relevant Security Council resolutions and are deeply regrettable.

The Agency continues to enhance its readiness to play an essential role in verifying the nuclear programme of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea if a political agreement is reached among the countries concerned.

I again call upon the Democratic People's Republic of Korea to comply fully with its obligations under relevant resolutions of the Security Council and of the IAEA Board of Governors, to cooperate promptly with the Agency and to resolve all outstanding issues.

Through our technical cooperation programme, the Agency helps to improve the health and prosperity of millions of people by making nuclear science and technology available in health care, food and agriculture, industry and many other areas.

I see the enormous difference our work makes in my many visits to developing countries.

Capacity-building is a core element of the technical cooperation programme.

The Agency has supported nearly 50,000 fellowships since 1956, helping scientists from developing countries to significantly improve their skills. In a recent survey of former fellows, almost 90 per cent of respondents said their placements fully met their professional expectations and the needs of their home institutes.

The modernization of our nuclear applications laboratories at Seibersdorf, near Vienna, continues to make excellent progress.

When the modernization is completed, we will be able to deliver improved services to member States to make food safer, improve control of harmful insect pests

and maximize the benefits of new radiation technology for cancer treatment — to name just a few examples.

Major construction work on all new laboratory buildings at Seibersdorf is nearly complete. I am very grateful for the generous contributions received so far. I encourage all member States in a position to do so to contribute to the costs of equipping the new buildings.

Last month, we marked the twentieth anniversary of the IAEA Environment Laboratories at their present location in Monaco with a celebration attended by His Serene Highness Prince Albert II.

The Environment Laboratories make nuclear and isotopic science available to help countries achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, not least Goal 14 on conservation of the oceans.

They monitor environmental radioactivity in the seas and oceans. They also help to address issues such as the impact of climate change, marine plastics, heavy metals and organic pollutants on our seas and oceans.

I was pleased to note, Madam President, that you included the problem of plastics pollution as one of seven priority themes for this session.

Helping countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, using relevant nuclear technology, is an important part of our work.

In fact, IAEA helps countries to use nuclear science and technology to meet at least 9 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals directly, including those aimed at ending hunger, improving human health, increasing the availability of clean water and, of course, energy.

The Agency continues to participate in the annual high-level political Forum on monitoring implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. Member States encouraged our participation in a resolution at our General Conference in September.

We also actively support South-South cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear technology. There are many excellent examples of such cooperation, such as the training of radiation oncologists and medical physicists to help improve access to effective cancer treatment in developing countries.

The IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology will take place in Vienna from 28 to 30 November. It will focus on the many ways in which nuclear science and technology help countries to address current and emerging development challenges. I encourage all member States to participate at the ministerial level.

The Agency's latest annual projections show that nuclear power will continue to play a key role in the world's low-carbon energy mix.

However, without significant progress on using the full potential of nuclear power, it will be difficult for the world to secure sufficient energy to achieve sustainable development and to mitigate climate change.

Regarding the IAEA low enriched uranium bank in Kazakhstan, I expect that the procurement process will be completed in 2018 and that the bank will be delivered to the storage facility in 2019.

Due attention to safety and security is essential in all uses of nuclear and radiation technologies. Nuclear safety and security are national responsibilities, but IAEA plays the central role in ensuring effective international cooperation.

We continue to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of Agency peer review and advisory services in nuclear safety and security so that they can better support member States in the application of IAEA safety standards and security guidance.

We have begun preparations for the next IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security, which will take place at the ministerial level in Vienna in February 2020.

We continuously implement efficiency measures in order to make optimal use of the resources entrusted to us by member States. But demand for Agency support is steadily increasing. It is essential that member States make available the resources we need to provide the services they expect.

I am working hard to increase the proportion of women on the Agency's staff, especially in more senior positions. My goal is to achieve gender parity among the most senior officials by 2021.

Finally, I thank the staff of the Agency for their commitment and dedication to delivering on our important mandate.

I am grateful to all IAEA member States for their active support for the Agency and for me personally and to Austria for being an exemplary host country.
