

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR ABDUL SAMAD MINTY, GOVERNOR OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA TO THE INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY  
AT THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**AGENDA ITEM 4: NUCLEAR VERIFICATION**

**(B) IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NPT SAFEGUARDS AGREEMENT AND RELEVANT  
PROVISIONS OF UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTIONS IN THE  
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN**

Chairperson,

South Africa associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the Non-Aligned Movement. My delegation thanks the Director General for the report as well as for the technical briefing for Member States held on 11 November 2011.

South Africa also appreciates the commitment and perseverance of the Agency's inspectors in verifying the implementation of the Islamic Republic of Iran's safeguards agreement with the Agency. On your shoulders rests an important responsibility to provide the Board with accurate and impartial reports, compiled without undue pressure and hindrance and with due regard to confidentiality, which would allow the Board to consider this matter based on the technical facts provided.

Chairperson,

South Africa notes with satisfaction from the latest report of the Director-General that the Agency continues to be able to verify the non-diversion of nuclear material "declared by Iran". However, South Africa also shares the concern of the Agency that it remains unable to provide credible assurances about the "absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in Iran".

We also note with a sense of unease, that this time the Agency has provided us with a report containing information characterised by several uncertainties and doubts. From the report and its Annex we discern that the Agency is not yet sure of the continuation of some of the activities alleged to be undertaken by Iran. There is no clarification which of the various procurement activities were successful.

While the report indicates that information was gathered from 10 Member States, it is also clear that some of the key allegations were provided by just one or two Member States. The Secretariat would also need to assure the Board of the veracity and strength of information gathered from a member of the clandestine nuclear supply network, a network whose members were engaged in illegal activities. Since the Agency saw it fit to provide such detailed information it could also have helped the Board if the countries who gave the information were also named.

In our view this could be linked to the apparent pressure that has been applied to the Agency to provide, as soon as possible, the Board with a "comprehensive analysis and assessment of the military dimensions of Iran's nuclear programme". We believe that, perhaps, the Secretariat could have informed those Member States that sought these "best assessments" that it was not yet ready to provide conclusive information, and that it still had much technical work to do on the subject.

In terms of the comprehensive safeguards agreements with the Agency, the key aspect of the Agency's verification activities is the conclusion drawn from these activities, which would then enable the Board to consider this matter and take appropriate decisions, if necessary. As for the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Agency has indeed concluded that its declared nuclear material remained in peaceful activities.

Chairperson,

Since being seized with this issue from 2003, the Board has emphasised its resolve to work for a diplomatic solution and the importance of the Islamic Republic of Iran to extend, to the Agency, the necessary and required co-operation to resolve the questions surrounding its nuclear programme. This relates especially to the efforts by the Agency to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran.

While such co-operation in the past has indeed resolved many of these questions, a renewed dedication by the Islamic Republic of Iran to intensify its co-operation with the Agency, without pre-conditions, is of the utmost importance.

In this regard, South Africa welcomes the commitment expressed by the Islamic Republic of Iran in a letter dated 30 October 2011, wherein an invitation was extended to the Deputy Director General for Safeguards to visit the Islamic Republic of Iran "to remove ambiguities, if any", regarding its nuclear programme. South Africa considers it vital for the Islamic Republic of Iran to follow through on this commitment, and for the Agency to seize this opportunity and enhance its engagement with the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Such co-operation is indispensable in contributing to build the required confidence in the exclusively peaceful nature of the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme, and thereby assisting the Agency to clarify possible activities that could have a military nuclear dimension.

Furthermore, the Board outlined certain confidence building measures to be implemented by Iran to create the necessary conditions for resolving these outstanding questions. These measures, including the suspension of all enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, have been made a legally binding requirement in terms of relevant United Nations Security Council resolutions.

South Africa, therefore, calls upon the Islamic Republic of Iran, as we have consistently done in the past, to fully implement these requirements of the UN Security Council.

Chairperson,

South Africa's approach to the implementation of safeguards is informed by our principled position of the total elimination of all nuclear weapons, and in reaching this goal, of ensuring their non-proliferation, both horizontally and vertically. Furthermore, that our inalienable right to utilise all aspects of the atom for peaceful purposes, requires from us to build confidence with the international community in the peaceful nature of these activities.

In this regard, we have mandated the Agency to verify that all our nuclear material remained in peaceful activities. Board members may recall that since the termination of Apartheid South Africa's nuclear weapons programme, it has taken the Agency nearly 18 years to conclude for the first time, as outlined in the Safeguards Implementation Report of 2010, that

all nuclear material in South Africa remained in peaceful activities. This broader conclusion was also drawn for the first time for four other Member States of the IAEA.

This demonstrates the thoroughness and time-consuming nature of the Agency's inspection regime. Although the Agency has been focusing on the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran for some time, especially in its attempts to provide credible assurances about the absence of undeclared activities, we should not race to premature conclusions that have dire consequences for reaching a "diplomatic solution to the Iranian nuclear issue".

Chairperson,

The objective remains to allow the Agency to undertake its verification activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and allow for an environment that would facilitate corrective action to be undertaken by Iran, which would re-establish confidence in its nuclear programme.

Where the Agency finds issues of non-compliance, its emphasis is on working with such States to undertake corrective action. Our focus on the Board is, therefore, not punitive in nature, or the denial of rights they are entitled to.

This may be the wish of others, but in doing so we should be conscious that such action would only work towards isolating those from which we require more co-operation and transparency. Such action will only curtail, or even terminate, the involvement of the Agency, to the detriment of us all.

Chairperson,

In the recent past the Board has through a divided voice attempted to deal with questions and clarifications of the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran. Through divisive Board resolutions we have undermined the most powerful tool available to the Agency, namely the consensus voice.

In this context, the best approach is for the Board to return to the long tradition of a united voice, where collectively we can convey the following message:

Our unequivocal commitment to rid the world of nuclear weapons;  
Our respect for the right of all to use the atom for peaceful purposes only;  
Our requirement for full compliance with safeguards agreements concluded with the Agency to verify that all of our nuclear activities are indeed for peaceful purposes;  
We will refrain from any action that would undermine the credibility of the Agency;  
We reaffirm the requirement in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations to abide by binding decisions of the UN Security Council;  
We express our requirement for the Islamic Republic of Iran to expeditiously increase its co-operation, without pre-conditions, with the Agency, and;  
Our commitment to resolve the outstanding questions and clarifications of the Islamic Republic of Iran's nuclear programme through corrective and non-punitive action and through diplomacy.

In conclusion Chairperson,

On 23 April 1987, the then President of the African National Congress of South Africa, Mr Oliver Reginald Tambo, was a guest of honour at the Hiroshima Peace Memorial, and in an inscription in the Guest Book at the memorial he wrote the following:

"History chose the city of Hiroshima to tell the world never again to go to war, never ever to abandon the struggle for peace. The tragic story of Hiroshima told in this painful museum is

a guide to present and future generations if mankind and our planet is to be saved from complete obliteration. “

The eventual abandonment of the nuclear weapons programme by Apartheid South Africa is testimony to this principled position of the liberation movement of South Africa against nuclear weapons and of their elimination.

South Africa, therefore, will not waiver from this commitment, and with reference to the nuclear programme of the Islamic Republic of Iran, we will work tirelessly with the Agency until full confidence has been re-established in the peaceful nature of this nuclear programme.

With reference to the Resolution in document GOV/2011/67 before us we are ready to join consensus and hope that the matter can be diplomatically resolved soon.

I thank you.