

DRAFT SOUTH AFRICAN STATEMENTS TO THE IAEA BOARD OF GOVERNORS: 7-11  
MARCH 2011

AGENDA ITEM 5: ASSURANCE OF NUCLEAR FUEL SUPPLY

Chairperson,

My delegation associates itself with the joint G77 and NAM statement delivered under this agenda item.

Chairperson,

South Africa is disappointed to observe that the discussion on the assurance of nuclear fuel supply in the context of this Board continues to take the path that contradicts our collective decision on this issue taken during the May 2010 NPT Review Conference, contained in the “Conclusions and recommendations for follow-on actions” under recommendation Action 58, in which States parties were to “[c]ontinue to discuss further, in a non-discriminatory and transparent manner under the auspices of the IAEA or regional forums, the development of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, including the possibilities of creating mechanisms for assurance of nuclear fuel supply, as well as possible schemes dealing with the back-end of the fuel cycle without affecting rights under the Treaty and without prejudice to national fuel cycle policies, while tackling the technical, legal and economic complexities surrounding these issues, including, in this regard, the requirement of IAEA full scope safeguards”.

This is clearly demonstrated by the lack of open and all inclusive discussion on earlier proposals adopted in a non-consensual manner by the Board. This is against the principle and spirit of consensus that we all undertook to honour during the NPT Review Conference. My delegation still believes that the proposal from several delegations to convene an open-ended Working Group on this issue could have contributed towards building consensus on various aspects of the multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle had it not been rejected by some who appear not to want a discussion but simply to adopt a majority decision by the Board instead of by consensus. Chairperson, we deeply regret this development.

It is also clear to us that so far these proposals have not taken into account the concerns and needs of potential recipients. Even the proposal before us today contains an imbalance of obligations between suppliers and recipients. Perhaps this should not surprise us since all proposals so far have been presented by the potential suppliers.

Chairperson,

It is also the haste with which these proposals are pushed through the Board that could lead some to question their real motive.

Chairperson,

My delegation, however, also believes that had there been more time for discussions we could have worked towards building consensus on this important issue.

South Africa has consistently strived to reach Board and other decisions by consensus as was demonstrated at the 2010 NPT Review Conference.

Chairperson,

Several delegations have also today, raised very substantial and serious concerns regarding the proposal before us and we share them. We hope that the Resolution will therefore not be put to this meeting and that the matter is discussed in the Open-ended Working Group proposed by the G77 and NAM. Otherwise there will be no consensus on the Resolution since my delegation will also not be able to join the consensus in approving the proposal before us.