

**Draft Speech of the Hon'ble Foreign Minister on nuclear safety  
and security during the 66<sup>th</sup> Session of General Assembly,  
September, 2011**

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to extend my heartiest congratulation on your election as the President of this meeting. And I also thank H.E. Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Secretary General for his initiative to hold this very important discussion today on nuclear safety and security.

Mr. President,

Nuclear energy is considered as the world's principal source of pollution-free energy. Like fossil fuel, nuclear energy does not pollute air or produces greenhouse gases. The production and use of nuclear energy enable us to preserve the Earth's climate without causing negative impact on the process of climate change. It is the most economically and ecologically efficient among all energy sources. Considering the financial investment, land requirement and its environmental impact, it produces the electricity most.

“Nuclear energy has a future in the low-carbon world” was one of the main messages of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Safety held in the IAEA Headquarter, Austria this June. The economic and ecological advantages of electricity production, more than fifty years of successful operation, the worldwide experiences in improving the nuclear safety and security and safeguards and the continuous development of the nuclear safety culture has made the nuclear energy definitely a choice for power generation.

Besides the benefit of electricity, civil nuclear applications also greatly help in agricultural production by developing plant varieties coping with different weather situations and by fighting deadly diseases like cancer.

Mr. President,

In September 2000, we came together here at United Nations Headquarters in New York to adopt the United Nations Millennium Declaration, committing our nations to a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty and setting out a series of time-bound targets. Unfortunately many developing countries and most of the LDCs are even now under extreme difficulties to achieve the MDGs. We are still plagued with poverty and hunger, food and energy scarcity, climate change and all kinds of killer diseases. To bring to an end to these vicious crises, we must continue our constant endeavor towards development. And the process to development has never been painless. It takes effort, time and resources to move along the course towards development and one of the most important resources for development today is energy. This is true for every country, irrespective of their levels of development.

Mr. President,

The current global energy crisis and the particular dependence on fossil fuel have already dealt a telling blow to the development endeavors of the both developed and developing nations especially in the countries which hardly have any indigenous energy resource. However, due to rapid depletion of even fossil fuel resources and the issue of global warming due to the emission of green-house gases, there is a global understanding for renewable and non-carbon energy. Here, the nuclear energy may assume particular significance.

Mr. President,

Human civilization is progressing everyday with new technology and the population of the world is increasing progressively. These two phenomena will necessitate the requirement of more energy in the coming days. We will need more energy for building more infrastructures for a growing population and for their daily needs.

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The ongoing global energy crisis is already having a telling effect on the development endeavors of developing nations, especially in the Asian countries with huge number of population, scarcity of indigenous energy resources and a fast-growing demand for energy. Certain factors have contributed to the interest in nuclear energy as a substitute for fossil energy across the Asian countries. These factors include gradual decreasing reliance on imported fossil fuel having financial, political and security implications, rapid depletion of oil/gas/coal reserves in fossil-energy-rich countries, improving energy security through energy-mix diversification and mitigation of global warming.

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New technologies like electric cars will put further strain on our energy requirement and the supply. On the contrary, the abundance of Uranium and Thorium in the nature guarantees nuclear power for many centuries for the whole mankind. Efficiency wise, other sources of renewable energy like wind and solar power are not viable enough compared to nuclear power. Very few countries are blessed with hydro-power.

Mr. President,

The unfortunate disaster of the oil rig Deepwater Horizon last year off the coast of Louisiana is still fresh in our memory. Coal mine accidents are a regular phenomenon in different parts of the world. So, like other types of energy technology, risks are also associated with nuclear power. However, the number of incidents in the nuclear energy production is very low compared to the worldwide production of nuclear power. If we analyze these few accidents, we will see that instead of any technological flaw, it was actually the lack of attention to the relevant and well-established safety and security measures that brought about these unfortunate incidents. We are very much concern about the major nuclear accidents and feel that international harmonization is essential to strengthen nuclear power plant safety and security through lessons derived from those accidents including the tragic accident of Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant

due to devastating earthquake and tsunami. The IAEA may establish a detailed action plan in order to strengthen nuclear power plant safety globally and to further strengthen its role in conducting international surveillance of nuclear safety and emergency response.

Mr. President,

To ensure our future supply of clean energy we must also ensure proper safety and security regime for the nuclear energy. For this, the primary responsibility rests with the nuclear power industrialized vendor countries, nuclear power operating countries, the newcomers to nuclear power programme. We must be continuously harbouring efforts to achieve a safe secured and effective plant design and other support activities like nuclear fuel cycle, radioactive and spent fuel management and storage facilities. At every stages of the nuclear power programme, the aspects of nuclear safety and security must be considered without compromising on the grounds of cost or any other consideration. A timely, transparent and prompt response to nuclear emergencies could minimize any adverse consequences nuclear accident/incident. Establishment of systems to cope with the coincidence of a nuclear accident and a massive natural disaster and improvement of communication mechanisms with relevant organizations must be in place and disaster preparedness and routine oversight mechanisms must be established and ensured. Safety standards as formulated by IAEA should be strictly adhered to and these should be continuously reviewed, strengthened and implemented through cooperation at bilateral, regional and multilateral levels. I also call upon IAEA to provide constant guidance and expertise to the Member States.

Mr. President,

Periodic review by experts from IAEA or any international safety expert under IAEA's established framework may be pursued regarding national regulatory framework, emergency preparedness and the operation of nuclear power plant. In this context, I call upon all operators and suppliers to be transparent when they assess the safety, security and risk of a nuclear plant and they should cooperate closely with all relevant multilateral mechanisms in case there is any adverse finding regarding any nuclear installation. All States, regulatory authorities, operators and suppliers

should ensure continuous technical and scientific support, training and recent updates to the human resources or personnel associated with the operation of the nuclear plant. Any scientific fact or update regarding nuclear safety and security must be shared and exchanged immediately by all the stake holders. Not only operation of nuclear plants, these exchange of information and updates must also cover transport of radioactive materials, the management of radioactive waste and the physical security of nuclear installations against any terrorist attack. The recent Fukushima accident undoubtedly once again reiterates the need for a strengthened system of national, regional and international emergency preparedness and response as well as for strengthened cooperation among national regulatory authorities and among relevant international organizations. This exchange of information may be given an institutional structure under IAEA.

Mr. President,

We have several international legal frameworks regarding safety and security of civil use of nuclear energy. However, if it is felt necessary, we may further strengthen the existing legal frameworks with the recommendation of IAEA. We may also think of expanding the capacity of IAEA to provide response and assistance in case of emergency. As I mentioned before, both the regulators and the operators should receive continuous training and education regarding nuclear power programme and here IAEA can play a crucial role. We may also consider extending the present capacity of the Integrated Incident and Emergency Centre (IEC) under IAEA to cater to the needs of the developing countries and especially the LDCs to deal with any crisis and the post-crisis rehabilitation efforts.

Mr. President,

The present world is committed to develop global nuclear safety and security partnerships. Like many other nations, Bangladesh believes that the main concerns of nuclear safety and security are: (1) saving the world from nuclear weapons; (2) stopping nuclear proliferation; (3) stopping nuclear terrorism; (4) preventing nuclear accidents/incidents while harnessing nuclear technology for peaceful uses; (5) and properly disposing nuclear waste. In this context, I call upon all the concerns to be transparent

when they assess the safety, security and risk of a nuclear plant and they should cooperate closely with all relevant multilateral mechanisms in case there is any adverse finding regarding any nuclear installation. We may also think of developing a common understanding of internationally acceptable safety and security levels in the fields of nuclear installations and radioactive sources.

Bangladesh has firm confidence in IAEA and its guidelines and other safety measures. We have full support and strong commitment in implementation of nuclear conventions, cooperation on safety standards and harmonization of safety approaches under the leadership of the IAEA. To strengthen international co-operation in the Nuclear Safety and Security regime, we have signed all relevant international treaties, agreements and protocol such as, Convention on Nuclear Safety, Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Amendment thereto.

Bangladesh believes that the full implementation of international conventions on nuclear safety and security, the commitment to promote nuclear safety standards and security guidelines as well as the increased use of integrated review services are important prerequisites for the world's community to establish a global nuclear safety and security partnership. We call upon all states to join, as appropriate, and implement the respective international instruments.

We also have fully committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. Its nuclear energy program is very transparent. The country has endorsed international instruments in the nuclear non-proliferation and verification regime such as, NPT, Safeguards Agreements, Additional Protocol and CTBT.

Mr. President,

Since independence, Bangladesh has made significant progress towards achievements in the Socio- economic sectors. However, we are still short of the true growth potential due to inadequate infrastructure and lack of energy sources. My government under "Vision 2021" pledged to the

people to achieve a "Digital Bangladesh" transforming it into a knowledge-based and technology driven digitized middle income country by 2021. Like many others, Bangladesh still considers nuclear power is the most efficient clean energy and committed to continue with its program in the post-Fukushima era. To meet the rising demand for power for materializing the "Vision 2021" and to ensure energy security, my government is building Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) in Bangladesh.

Mr. President,

You are aware that Bangladesh is a very small country with a huge population. For us, the impact of a nuclear emergency will be enormous and might be irredeemable in terms of economy, physical safety of our people and environment. In view of this, the nuclear safety and security measures are extremely important for Bangladesh because the country is going to establish nuclear power plant for the first time. Bangladesh recognizes the international conventions and International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) standards from a good basis for the development of national nuclear regulatory systems, legislative and regulatory frameworks and security infrastructure, acceptable security culture, systems and practices. Bangladesh desires that the IAEA will play the key role to enhance the expert capacity in nuclear security, such as training in reporting illicit nuclear trafficking, evaluating nuclear security, reducing risk, as well as improving security to protect people, property and the environment from security events involving nuclear or other radioactive materials of the newcomer countries to nuclear power programme.

Mr. President,

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the developing countries and especially the LDCs to deal with any crisis and the post-crisis rehabilitation efforts. We hope that the IAEA will generate a Nuclear Security Fund on a voluntary contribution to support its Member States in any nuclear crisis situation.

Bangladesh will build nuclear reactors with advanced inherent safety features, complimented with the latest safety codes for severe accident prevention and capable of tolerating any severe man-made or natural events namely earthquakes, tsunami and flood.

Mr. President,

If we are to be concerned with nuclear energy then we must be concerned with the nuclear weapons and the sooner we can shift the nuclear power from the military use to the civil use, the earlier we will be relieved of the real threat emanating from nuclear energy. realization that the humanity should be the ultimate beneficiary of the nuclear power and the plea of safety and security should not deprive them of this divine blessing of the nature. We understand that future of nuclear energy will depend on the maintenance of highest safety standards and it is our duty to ensure it.

I wish all the success of this meeting.

I thank you all.