

Inauguration of the IAEA Workshop OIEA

November 3rd

Seville

Thank you very much Mr. Mayor, Mr. Taniguchi

Thank you for your words Mr. Mayor and thank you also for welcoming us to this wonderful Spanish city, a city that throughout history has shown its ability to incorporate and reconcile different cultures. For this very reason it is an ideal venue for the Workshop of the International Atomic Energy Agency, a workshop in which the Spanish regulatory authority and the entire international family, headed by the IAEA, will share good practices in the field of nuclear regulation in a truly unsurpassable setting.

For the CSN it is an honour to host the 2008 Workshop. Today we will be beginning the first working session, in which the regulatory authorities of all those countries that have requested an IRRS mission this year will be able to present their results and share their respective good practices and experiences.

Please allow me to begin by asking the question: Why carry out an IRRS mission?

As you are all aware, these missions are not obligatory for the different countries, but are requested by their governments and national authorities. Well, despite their not being obligatory, an increasing number of countries are asking the IAEA to review their regulatory systems, on the basis of the safety standards established by the International Agency.

We do this because we are convinced that it is the best way to contribute to the proper use of nuclear energy.

We all know that these are complicated times. Intense national and international debates are being held on the use of atomic energy, and the best way to act, from the perspective of a regulatory body, is to bring safety into line with the international standards, in order to guarantee the correct use of this energy source in our respective countries.

With its missions and safety guides the IAEA promotes international cooperation in the field of nuclear energy. The fundamental objective of this cooperation is in all cases to enhance safety standards, in the conviction that national improvements will lead to improvements at international level since, as Mr. Taniguchi has said in the past, a problem anywhere in the world will impact safety and confidence everywhere in the world.

It is certainly true that the missions are demanding, requiring major efforts from the regulatory bodies in terms of the ordering, systematisation and revision of their regulatory practices, as well as the full involvement of their personnel, but it should also be said that these efforts are worthwhile since they allow the robustness and coherence of the regulatory systems to be analysed. We are convinced that this is the best possible visiting card to present to the members of the public that we are required to protect and to whom we are accountable.

For Spain the IRRS Mission has been a stimulating experience that has covered the review and analysis of the following:

- ✓ The safety of nuclear power plants and fuel cycle facilities.
- ✓ The physical protection of radioactive sources.
- ✓ Safety and radiological protection in industrial and medical practices.
- ✓ Safety and radiological protection in the transport of radioactive materials.
- ✓ The management of radioactive waste, including spent fuel.
- ✓ Environmental surveillance.
- ✓ Emergency planning and preparedness.

The legislative and governmental responsibilities have also been analysed, as well as all the functions of the regulatory body.

As you will appreciate, this has been an integral review of the Spanish Nuclear Safety Council covering all the areas of the system, the first full-scope exercise of this kind performed by the IAEA.

Throughout these two days you will have the opportunity to analyse in detail what this review has meant and the way in which it has been carried out, and also to share experiences with the other missions that have taken place during the year. I feel sure that all the countries have something to contribute through the exchange of previous practices and the analysis of improvements.

Please allow me to say briefly that the results of the Spanish mission have been very positive for our country. Numerous good practices have been identified in working areas as important as the technical competence of the Council staff and the infrastructure required for the performance of their tasks, the legislative framework that guarantees the competence of the Council and its necessary independence, supervision of the nuclear power

plants through the Integrated Plant Supervision System (SISC) and progress in relation to transparency and public communication, among other areas.

The IAEA has also suggested areas for improvement for us to be more effective in our functions. These are measures that we will undoubtedly incorporate, since the objective of this review is none other than to ensure the on-going improvement of our work in order to offer the best results to society.

During 2007 and 2008, Australia, Japan, Mexico, Ukraine, Germany, Botswana and Venezuela, as well as Spain, have hosted visits by the inspectors of the IAEA for the second phase of the IRRS missions, and France and England have performed follow-ups of previous reviews.

During this workshop all these countries will be presenting their work and sharing experiences in order for other countries to be better prepared to receive their own missions and, especially, to improve their regulatory practices in the interests of heightened safety. During the second working session the United States, Great Britain, Russia, China and Vietnam will also be presenting papers.

I should like to conclude by underlining once more the importance of these missions, not only for the countries that request them but indeed for the entire international community. In a globalised world, we should all take each other into account and know-how, experience and good practices should be shared. This is precisely the effort that is being made by the International Atomic Energy Agency, an effort that is being backed by an

increasing number of countries that take the international safety standards of the United Nations on board as their own.

I do not wish to say much more, other than to wish you all a happy stay in Spain and a fruitful working experience and to hand over the baton to Mr. Taniguchi, Head of the IAEA Department of Nuclear Safety and Security for him to inaugurate the 2008 Workshop.

Thank you very much