

Remarks at Conference on

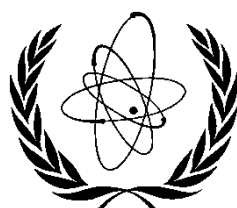
**Addressing Societal Challenges through
Advancing the Medical, Industrial and Research
Applications of Nuclear and Radiation Technology**

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INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen.

The title of this conference – *Advancing the Medical, Industrial and Research Applications of Nuclear and Radiation Technology* – is a good summary of the development side of the work of the IAEA.

As previous speakers have mentioned, this remarkable technology has very many beneficial applications.

It helps countries to produce more food, generate more electricity, treat diseases such as cancer, manage water supplies, protect the seas and oceans and respond to climate change – and much more.

The IAEA has been assisting developing countries in these areas for decades. Our motto is *Atoms for Peace and Development*. Today, helping countries to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, using relevant nuclear technology, is an important part of our work.

The European Union provides significant financial and technical support to the IAEA. Our cooperation was initially focussed on nuclear safeguards, but, over the years, it expanded into areas such as nuclear safety and security.

I am pleased that, in recent years, the IAEA and the EU have been working together in new areas, including agriculture, food safety, environmental monitoring and water resources. But to be honest, we are really only starting.

The IAEA's work in the areas I have mentioned makes a huge difference to the lives of millions of people in developing countries.

But IAEA assistance is not limited to developing countries.

Dozens of European countries have also benefited from the IAEA technical cooperation programme. Hundreds of Agency projects have been implemented across the continent.

In recent years, the two main areas of interest among our European Member States have been nuclear safety, and health and nutrition.

Current nuclear safety projects in EU countries include enhancing nuclear and radiation safety and the effectiveness of the regulatory infrastructure in Latvia, and improving the safety and quality of radiology services in Slovenia.

Croatia has used the sterile insect technique – a form of birth control for harmful insect pests – to reduce the damage caused to its orange crops by the Mediterranean fruit fly.

IAEA support helped Bulgaria to fight a cattle disease that can cause significant economic losses to farmers.

The Agency also works closely with EU candidate countries. Albania, for example, has received extensive assistance in improving the

availability of radiotherapy for cancer patients and implementing its national cancer control programme.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last week, I was in Pakistan. I visited the country's first Veterinary Residue Laboratory, which was established with assistance from the Agency.

In the past, meat products from Pakistan were sometimes rejected by EU countries because they did not comply with food safety standards. The new laboratory can test meat and other food products to international standards and certify that they do not contain drug residues that exceed safety limits.

This has important economic implications for Pakistan, where the livestock sector accounts for 12 percent of GDP, and it also potentially increases consumer choice in the EU.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I note that radiotherapy, nuclear medicine and related subjects will be the focus of several sessions at your meeting today.

Improving access to cancer treatment in developing countries has been a priority for me since I became Director General eight years ago.

The IAEA assists individual treatment centres, such as the impressive Cancer Diseases Hospital in Zambia which I visited in

January. We arrange education and training for oncologists, radiologists and medical physicists and help hospitals to procure equipment.

We also help governments to put national plans in place to offer comprehensive cancer care to their people.

The IAEA establishes global nuclear safety standards and security guidance and assists countries in implementing them. Our Dosimetry Laboratory near Vienna provides dosimetry auditing services for radiotherapy centres throughout the world, free of charge.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The work of the IAEA is unique within the UN family. No other organization offers the range of services related to nuclear science and technology that we do.

The IAEA Environment Laboratories in Monaco help countries to detect and measure pollution and contamination in the sea so they can take the necessary measures to protect consumers.

We also have eight nuclear applications laboratories near Vienna. These train scientists, support research in human health, food and other areas, and provide analytical services to national laboratories. Our laboratories work closely with more than 175 laboratories in EU Member States.

An extensive modernisation of the IAEA laboratories is well advanced, with generous support from a number of EU countries.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In the coming decades, the IAEA will continue to focus on delivering concrete results for our 169 Member States and improving the well-being and prosperity of the people of the world through the use of nuclear technology.

The continued support of our friends and partners in the European Union will be essential in enabling us to do so.

Thank you.