



energy

Department:
Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Keynote Address by Ms Tina Joemat-Pettersson, MP

Minister of Energy

Delivered by Mr Zizamele Mbambo: DDG Nuclear

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Programme Director

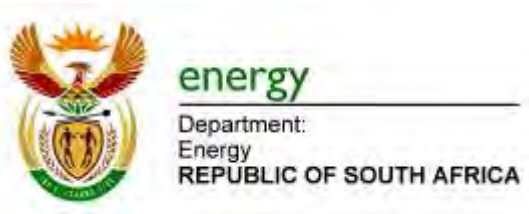
Mr Yukiya Amano, Director General of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA),

Ms Renate Czarwinski, International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA),

Mr Thabo Tselane, President of South African Radiation Protection Association (SARPA),

Mr Hendrik de Vos, President of South African Radiation Protection Society (SARPS)

Mr Thiagan Pather, IRPA14 Congress President and Congress Organising Committee



Mr Doug Chambers, IRPA14 Congress Chair of the Sponsorship Coordinator Support & Exhibition

Executives from the Energy and Nuclear Energy Industries
NGO's and Environmental Organisations

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

Programme Director,

Good Morning, it gives me great pleasure to address this congress which marks the first International Radiation Protection Association in African continent. We are proud and would like welcome you and to congratulate Southern African Radiation Protection Association and South African Radiation Protection Society for the splendid job of putting together the winning concept as well for the kind hospitality and for the excellent arrangements and efficient organization. This among other achievements is a historic event that the country achieved and proved to the world that Africa is capable.

I am informed that this is the largest gathering of radiation protection professionals from around the world to create a synergy to share good practices and identify the key issues in the radiation protection profession.

I have been doing a self-introspection on what does this mean to us as a country having the intention to expand on our nuclear programme. What other interventions need to be in place? Do we have capacity? If not, where and when can we develop the pool on nuclear professionals? I strongly believe that this Congress will assist us to address what is needed in order to reach our milestones and ensuring safe and secure nuclear activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

With the continuous learning from the Fukushima nuclear power plant accident that happened in Japan, has indicated that nuclear accidents resulting in serious radiological consequences can happen at any time. It is therefore very crucial to prepare for the unlikely events when developing measures for preventing nuclear accidents.

Programme Director, I strongly believe that preventive measures against possible accidental conditions will, with no doubt remain a fundamental nuclear safety objective, but occurrences of unexpected and largely unpreventable events should be considered. So, we need to direct our focus on the mitigation of radiological consequences towards the harm of the public in particular children and pregnant women. In the process of protecting the public, we need not to forget the emergency and recovery workers.

We are going to the 5th year since Fukushima nuclear accident happened, but most people still don't have a true reflection of what really happened

and very skeptical every time they hear nuclear. I am made to understand that there has been no single casualty from nuclear radiation and that we will continue to learn and implement lessons from this event as a collective. Ladies and Gentlemen, I consider now it is time to stop working in silos, and collectively work together to instill public's confidence on the safety of nuclear power plants that was shaken by the event.

As a country, in order to realise the true safety objective we will be conducting International Atomic Energy Agency mission called the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) this year. The recommendations from this mission will assist us to improve regulatory safety framework to address amongst others the harmonisation of safety and security aspects in the context of roles and responsibilities.

It is imperative to also ensure that the regulators are well resourced to fulfil their mandate. The safety and security of the nuclear sector as a whole requires continuous updating and benchmarking with the international best practice. Therefore, we are in the process of amending national legislations that governs nuclear facilities and activities.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

All of us working in the nuclear field have an enormous task ahead of us. It is our duty to work hard and ensure transparency about the risk of radiation and address the concerns raised by the public. It is therefore imperative for

all of us especially you scientists, to reach out to the public and educate everyone about nuclear energy.

South Africa, like any other developing country has a large portion of the population currently with no access to modern energy services and technologies. The use of firewood, crop residues or charcoal is still strongly used for cooking. This is resulting in a high incidence of respiratory diseases because of smoke, many women and girls have to spend hours collecting firewood and cutting trees contributing to deforestation. This calls for clean baseload nuclear energy.

A collective approach and adherence to the International Atomic Energy Agency safety standards, the nuclear community can reach greater heights. One of the greatest concerns emanate from acts of terror that have potential threats towards the health and safety of the personnel involved as well as to the general public. Hence, it is our responsibility to ensure that the movement of all radioactive material within and between countries should be subject to high standards of regulatory and well developed administrative controls.

Programme Director,

Looking into the theme of the Congress that says: *“Practising Radiation Protection, sharing the experience – new challenges”*. It is by sharing the South African achievements, that our country achieved on the safe operation of South Africa’s Fundamental Atomic Research Installation one

(SAFARI-1) for 51 years. The country celebrated the 50th year anniversary of SAFARI-1 research reactor last year. We are also looking forward to acquiring the second Multi-Purpose Research Reactor that will carry on the excellent work long after SAFARI 1 has been retired.

I would like to applaud our nuclear safety regulator on working tirelessly to ensure that the country is forever bestowing strong principles of safety and security culture. This is also an evident of the long safe record of operating the 2 units of Koeberg Nuclear Power Plant for the past 30 years.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As you are aware, the Government of South Africa is working towards expanding the nuclear programme with an addition of 9.6 GW of electricity as per approved Integrated Resource Plan (IRP). We understand that this type of energy source will require an enormous time to plan, construct, and operate but in a long term it will address the energy challenges and climate change. There are challenges that we are facing related to negative public perceptions that required us to demystify nuclear. But in spite of these challenges, we believe that it is very imperative for all to raise the benefits of nuclear energy and make sure it benefits us all and retains its rightful place in the energy mix.

Program Director,

The Department of Energy is currently finalizing on its Request For Proposals (RFP) to kick start the procurement implementation.

We have thus far ensured that we undertake the necessary consultations with key stakeholders and independent experts' technical review of our work prior to releasing this RFP to the market. This will ensure that the procurement of the nuclear new build programme proceeds in a manner that consistent with our country's Constitutional provisions and procurement prescripts and take into account the country's fiscal targets. We have thus held positive consultations in this regard.

The procurement process will be line with the successes of the Renewable Independent Power Producers procurement that the Department has implemented successfully. The Department will leverage on the experience of the IPP Office to conduct a successful nuclear procurement. Lessons learnt from that experience will be of tremendous benefit to this programme.

Lastly, Programme Director, I want to wish IRPA and its affiliates all the best for the rest of congress. I believe that your discussions will contribute to the success of the nuclear industry worldwide. I wish you have successful deliberations to achieve the goals of this Congress.

Thank you