

45th RCA General Conference Meeting

Vienna, Austria, Meeting Room 6, M Building

23 September 2016

Welcoming Remarks

by

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Mr Chairman,

Distinguished Representatives of the RCA State Parties,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am delighted to address the 45th General Conference Meeting of the RCA, and, on behalf of the Director General, to welcome all National Representatives, the Director of the RCA Regional Office, delegates and participants, especially those who are attending this meeting for the first time.

This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the IAEA. The RCA has played an active part in the successes of the IAEA Technical Cooperation in Asia for over 40 years. The Agreement aims for sustainable social and economic development in the areas of human health, food and agriculture, industrial applications, water resources and environmental protection in the Asia and the Pacific region. The commitment of RCA States Parties over these four decades demonstrates their dedication to promoting research, development and utilization of nuclear science and technology through regional cooperation.

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Representatives,

I note that the revised text of the Regional Cooperative Agreement 2017 was adopted at the 38th Meeting of National RCA Representatives held in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia, 17-20 May 2016. I would like to take this opportunity to remind you to encourage your Government to become a Party by notifying its acceptance to the Director General of the Agency. In doing so, your Government ensures the continuance of the RCA.

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Representatives,

The current RCA programme consists of fifteen on-going projects, and implementation of these projects is progressing well, in line with the defined objectives and work plans. Twenty-eight regional events, comprising training courses and meetings, have already been carried out in 2016. This constitutes an implementation rate of about 65%. The remaining events have been arranged and will be completed as planned. In addition, project monitoring and reporting on progress in project implementation have significantly improved, enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the implementation of RCA projects. I take the opportunity to remind you of the importance of reporting through the PPAR, and that we expect all Member States to do this for both national and regional projects. You will recall that this was stressed by Member States in last year's GC resolution on strengthening the Agency's technical cooperation activities.

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Representatives,

I understand that the proposed RCA programme for the 2018–2019 TC cycle is moving ahead well, in line with the guidelines and timeframe set by the Agency. A project design meeting has been planned and will take place at the IAEA Headquarters in Vienna, from 31 October to 4 November 2016, which provides a good opportunity for Lead Country Coordinators, RCA experts, IAEA

technical officers and PMOs to work together to enhance the quality of RCA project designs for the 2018-2019 TC cycle. I trust that all RCA States Parties will make extra efforts to further improve the quality of their project designs, taking into consideration the feedback received from the Secretariat. Member States also called for the optimization of the quality, number and impact of TC projects in last year's GC resolution on technical cooperation. In addition, the RCA needs to further strengthen its ownership and leadership in the formulation, implementation and management of cooperative projects.

Because of limited TCF availability, I strongly urge you to explore all possible opportunities for strengthening partnerships and securing extrabudgetary funding in support of the proposed RCA programme. Last year's GC resolution recalls that the financing of TC is a shared responsibility, and encourages Member States that are in a position to do so to make voluntary contributions.

I would like to commend the States Parties' decision to extend the RCA project RAS0074, 'Enhancing the Management of the RCA Agreement and its Programme'. This project has proven to be an important tool in ensuring the smooth and effective implementation of the RCA programme as a whole. I would like to acknowledge the generous extrabudgetary contributions of Australia, China, Japan and Korea, and I encourage all the RCA State Parties to consider additional fund mobilization for the follow-up project.

Mr Chairman, distinguished representatives,

I look forward to hearing more on the establishment and proposed work plans of three Working Groups: the Working Group on Resource Mobilization, the Working Group on Human Resource Development, and the Working Group on Coordination of the Medium Term Strategy. I believe that with this systematic

approach, the RCA programme will increase its impact on social and economic development in the region.

I am also pleased to know that the RCA Regional Office is willing to take on administrative work related to the RCA, which will allow the IAEA to focus more on the RCA programme.

Mr Chairman, Distinguished Representatives,

Before I close, I would like to mention that the first ever international conference on the TC programme will be held in 2017. The goal of this conference is to raise awareness of the achievements and potential of the IAEA's technical cooperation programme, and to create and strengthen partnerships with Member States, sister UN organizations, and a range of other relevant partners. I urge you to promote the conference through your networks, and I look forward to your government's support and participation.

I would like to conclude by thanking Mr Aldo Malavasi, IAEA Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications, and our colleagues in the other technical Departments, for their excellent cooperation in ensuring the successful implementation of the RCA Programme. Their support is one of the key foundation stones for the timely and efficient 'one-house' provision of support to the RCA States Parties.

Once again, I would like to assure you of the IAEA's full collaboration, and the strong commitment of the Department of Technical Cooperation, especially through the Division for Asia and the Pacific, in support of the RCA programme.

I wish you a fruitful meeting, and a very pleasant stay in Vienna.

Thank you for your attention.