



Permanent Mission of
ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN
to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)

Heinestr. 19/1/1 A-1020 Vienna/Austria
Phone: (0043-1) 214 09 71 Fax: (0043-1) 214 09 73

Statement of the Islamic Republic of Iran
before the Board of Governors
(March 2003)

by H.E. Ambassador Ali Akbar SALEHI

In the name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Madam Chairperson,

At the outset allow me to thank you for your diligent effort in the management of the Board of Governors and the Director General Dr. ElBaradei for his lucid, comprehensive, fair and balanced statement.

It is indeed very saddening to witness a looming, avoidable and an unwanted war to be shaping. Let's pray and hope that wisdom and prudence rather than authoritarianism and unilateralism prevails the world. This very sensitive and critical moment in the world affairs shall be a watershed in the formation of a new world order. We are, however, of the belief that truth and justice shall eventually emerge.

Madam Chairperson, before getting into my main statement, I initially wish to touch upon a few points raised by some of our colleagues. First and foremost, some of the statements were non-starter statements in the sense

that they carried with them the concept of interference into the internal affairs of a Sovereign State - a state holding an independent, proud and a powerful nation - by issuing directives as to what it should and should not do. According to the principles of International Law no country in the world is permitted to compel, enforce or impose any legally binding instruments upon any other sovereign country. Secondly phrases such as nuclear secrecy and other dubious phrases are imprudent to use, especially in the light of such development as Niger Scandal. Thirdly, pasting ones own unfounded concern to the concern of International Community is not a fair thing to do. The unfortunate result of such transmittance will be the fatal mistake of the illusion that the so called Coalition of the Willing is - of course wrongly- the International Community.

Madam Chairperson,

Iran being a signatory of the NPT and other important international conventions such as CWC, BWC, CTBT, ...etc, has always been a faithful and a responsible member and has persistently ushered in its commitment by maintaining its close, cordial and honest cooperation with the relevant international agencies such as the IAEA. Unlike some distinct others, we have never challenged any of these international conventions. We did not block the strengthening of the BWC. We never undermined the CWC. We did not reject CTBT. We did not ignore the Kyoto protocol. Forget the unilateral withdrawal from the ABM and let alone the adoption of the Nuclear Posture Review. In fact we seek our security in the security of the International Community and not the other way round. For example we are distinct from those who uphold the international norms as long as it suits their mere interest best.

The I.R. of Iran as a victim of weapons of mass destruction has engaged actively in combating the menace of all weapons of mass destruction including nuclear weapons. We are the only victims of the WMD in the last generation. Thanks to the generosity of the suppliers of such appalling weapons. Those who endorsed the use of such weapons then, because they were used in accordance with their interest are now waging a devastating war using those same weapons as an excuse. Those who turned their eyes when the Halabja massacre erupted are now shedding their tears to no avail. Please refer to Herald Tribune, Friday Jan 17, 2003 p.8 and I quote “ ... Iran rushed western reporters to the blighted town...”. In response the United

States launched the “Iran too” gambit...”. We ardently hope that the fabrication of another gambit is stopped, before it is too late.

The Iranian people have deeply felt the horror of these weapons and are determined to ensure that no other people will have to go through the same agony. We intend to pursue this objective by advocating and promoting a world free from all such inhuman weapons and for nearly over two decades, this fact has vividly been reflected in our constant call for the establishment of Nuclear Weapons Free Zone in the Middle East. Only one well known country in the region, however- as the non-adherent party to the NPT- has so far not been cooperative in this regard. I ask: how does one explain the prevalent double standard in this regard. One country defies the world and remains safe and the other is fully compliant and remains under implicit threat.

Madam Chairperson,

Dr. El Baradei’s first visit as DG to my country was made in the year 2000, during which he visited Isfahan’s nuclear site and was officially informed about the intention of my country in undertaking certain activities in the field of nuclear fuel cycle technology and construction of their facilities such as the Uranium Conversion Facility (UCF). Although my country then had not yet adhered to the Subsidiary Arrangement, nevertheless it had willingly put that important project under the IAEA safeguard inspection. This attitude of vivid self-transparency was a sign of good faith welcome by IAEA. As a reminder it is worth nothing that modified Subsidiary Arrangement requires the submission of Early Design Information Questionnaire for new facilities, while the elder one required the country to submit the completed Agency Design Information Questionnaire 180 days before the facility is scheduled to receive nuclear material for the first time. This rule has been observed in the case of the enrichment facility in Natanz. Therefore there has been nothing secret and no rule violated.

Moreover in the month of June 2002 we reasserted to the Secretariat the country’s involvement in other areas of fuel cycle to serve as basis of technical and material support and also as a secured source of fuel for the 6000 Mwe nuclear power plants to be constructed within a period of 20 years. Later in the 46th General Conference of the IAEA, our head of atomic energy organization announced and I quote: ” Iran is embarking on a long –

term plan, based on the merits of energy mix, to construct nuclear power plants with a total capacity of 6000 Mwe within two decades. Naturally, such a sizeable project entails with it an all out planning well in advanced in various fields of nuclear technology such as fuel cycle, safety and waste management. I take this opportunity to invite all the technologically advanced member states to participate in my country's ambitious plan for the construction of nuclear power plants and the associated technologies such as fuel cycle, safety and waste management techniques."

Following these directives my country set out to its lonely pursuit of indigenous nuclear technology. Because of the imposed ban and sanction, my country had no other choice but to settle on two possible paths to that end namely, the heavy water and uranium enrichment paths. This has been the only natural course that has been pursued by all other countries that have successfully developed their indigenous nuclear technology. If the average size of a nuclear reactor is taken to be about 300 Mwe _ the right size for my country_ that would mean that Iran would have to construct about 20 reactors over the next 2 decades. We should also bear in mind that Light Water Reactors and Heavy Water Reactors are real contenders. There are many countries that enjoy having both types of these reactors. It is also very clear that the future expansion in the use of nuclear power will depend to a large extent on the continued innovation in reactor and fuel cycle technology.

Madam Chairperson,

Just as a reminder, it is worth noting that my country's current electrical production is above 30000 Mwe, the highest in the Middle East, and its percentage annual growth is among the highest in the world about 10% per year. It is also useful to inform the board that in the mid seventies a thorough 20 Year Socio-Economic Plan was drafted by a prestigious American company called the Stanford Research Institute (SRI). In that detailed and scientific study a recommendation was made to the effect that the country should construct over 20000 Mwe of nuclear power plants in a span of 20 years. I presume that my colleagues, here, in the Board are very well aware that oil and natural gas are not commodities to be recently discovered in my country. In fact Iran was the first country in the region (the Middle East) in which, oil was explored and extracted (1907). The essential question before us now is which recommendation and advise are we to listen to; the one put

forth by the American scientist to construct about 20000 Mwe of nuclear power plants or the non-scientific, political motivated, biased and interfering type of remarks made by their diplomats and politicians that since Iran is rich in oil resources, it therefore needs not to have nuclear power plants. I ask: does the same advise apply to some other fossil fuel rich countries such as the US itself with over 100 nuclear power plants, Russia, UK, Mexico, Canada, etc .

Indeed it is a well-established technical and economic fact that the best use that a country like mine can make out of its uranium ores is to replace oil as a source of primary energy. It is worth noting that the population of my country is about 70 million plus about 3 million Afghan and Iraqi refugees. The total oil output of the country is about 4 million barrels per day and the internal consumption is about 2 million compared to 600000 barrels per day before the revolution, i.e. 25 years ago. The country's oil export is about 2 million, almost equivalent to the production of each of the tiny Persian Gulf states with less than 1 to a maximum few million population. It is predicted that within 2 decades from now almost most of our oil production will be consumed internally and as a result nothing tangible will be left for export.

Madam Chairperson,

At this juncture, I take the opportunity to announce that His Excellency Mr. Aghazadeh, the Vice President of the Islamic Republic and head of the Atomic Energy Organization of Iran will be here in early May to give a comprehensive presentation of my country's peaceful and transparent nuclear activities.

Madam Chairperson,

Upon an invitation extended to Dr. ElBaradei to visit the fuel cycle facilities in Iran, he made his 2nd trip in February 21st this year. During this trip he visited the Natanz enrichment site and had a constructive and fruitful meeting with our president Mr. Khatami. Following his trip, a team of inspectors went to Iran and began to draw up the relevant upcoming safeguard processes and to settle, if any, outstanding safeguard issues.

Madam Chairperson, I would like to reiterate over again that complete transparency of my country's nuclear activities is a serious commitment

endorsed by my government. One of the very positive outcomes of Dr. ElBaradei's visit to Iran was the acceptance by my government to concur with the Modified Subsidiary Arrangement. Moreover, as expressed in the past, my government has repeatedly and explicitly made it clear that it looks at the additional protocol with a positive view and that it also gives it the needed consideration and has always expressed its readiness to enter into serious negotiations with the relevant parties. Furthermore, as a sign of our sincere commitment to non-proliferation, we have already approached – since month of September, that is about 7 months ago – the NSG and have requested their expertise and experience in drafting our National Export Control Regulations. Last but not least, we hope that emphasis on the Additional Protocol shall in no way reduce the viability of the current effective Comprehensive Safeguard Regime.

Finally, Madam Chairperson, allow me to briefly recount an incident. It was in the year 2000 when I was invited to give a presentation – to a selected audience – at the university of Colombia in New York. After my presentation a member of the Japanese delegation raised the issue of the signing of the Additional Protocol by Iran. After his comment an American gentleman named Mr. McCormack who now happens to be the US National Security Council spokesman, stated very explicitly “that even if the Iranian government signs the additional protocol a hundred times, we will continue with our pressure on Iran until we reach a political détente and then we will offer them two of our most beautiful reactors”. In this regard another outright statement is made by Mr. Sokolski _ a US Deffence Department official in the first Bush administration_ he has said “whether there is an economic rationale doesn't matter.”

If there is anything to be appreciated about the American diplomacy it is this element of openness and of being unequivocal and this fact probably stems from the legend that ” Might makes Right”.

Thank you