



# FRANCE

## **Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for the 2010 NPT Review Conference (New York, May 4-15, 2009)**

**Statement by H.E. Eric Danon  
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to the Conference on Disarmament  
Head of the French Delegation**

**"Chapter 3"**

**(New York, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2009)**



Mr. Chairman,

1. The French Delegation first of all wishes to associate itself with the declaration made by the Czech Republic on behalf of the European Union.

Mr. Chairman,

2. The facts are there for all to see. Global warming is threatening our planet, reserves of fossil fuels are becoming scarce and many countries are becoming increasingly concerned over their energy security. Nuclear energy is now becoming more widely accepted as an integral part of the energy mix able to meet that demand by offering a widely available, cost effective energy which is based on proven and environmentally-friendly technology.
3. Nuclear energy has an essential contribution to make to sustainable development: in the fields of health, food supply and agriculture, access to water and energy and protection of the environment.
4. Worried about their energy security and cautious about sustainable development, more and more States are showing interest for nuclear energy. We cannot ignore this urgent and legitimate demand. The international community must respond to it, while removing the risk of proliferation associated in particular with the nuclear fuel cycle. This is a major challenge for the present NPT Review Cycle.
5. In an address to the United Nations Conference on Climate Change on September 24<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the French President emphasized that: "France is ready to help any country wishing to acquire civil nuclear energy. We can't have an energy for the future for the Western countries and have Oriental countries which can't get access to it."
6. France intends to share its experience in this field. In this respect, France pays particular attention to the requirements expressed by developing countries. France has signed several bilateral cooperation agreements in the field of peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Such agreements form the legal framework required for any long-term partnership and set out the conditions for cooperation in detail, particularly those relating to application of **the highest international standards in terms of safety, security and non-proliferation**.
7. These agreements cover **all geographical areas**. The most recent agreements were signed with **developing countries**, particularly in the North Africa – Middle East region. In fact, the Delegations will find an information book on France's actions in favor of development of peaceful uses of nuclear energy.
8. In parallel with its bilateral partnerships, France plays an active role in collective **international co-operation** projects in the field of civil nuclear energy.
9. France considers that international cooperation is essential for the design of a new generation of safer, more competitive reactors, which will be more resistant to proliferation and generate less long-term radioactive waste.
10. It is a member of the **Generation IV** International Forum, in which it currently acts as Chair, and is also a member of the IAEA's International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles (INPRO). It is also an active

participant in the **GNEP** (Global Nuclear Energy Partnership) initiative, having organized the most recent ministerial conference in October 2008 in Paris.

11. France has always attached a great deal of importance to the promotion of the IAEA and strongly supports the technical cooperation programme. This commitment manifests itself in the form of the hosting of trainees and training programmes, in particular in the field of radiation protection. France also directly funds large-scale projects and French specialists contribute to expert missions in many fields.
12. Nuclear can only grow in confidence. That is the reason why we should be vigilant in order to assure that it will develop in a responsible manner, with the best conditions of non-proliferation, security and safety. This goal is shared by the European Union which presents, during this preparatory committee, an ambitious and concrete action plan for assuring a responsible development of nuclear energy. France is bringing its full support to this action plan.
13. First of all, we should be particularly vigilant of any abuses of this right, recognized by Article IV, by States which do not pursue in good faith the objectives in compliance with the Treaty.
14. While the Treaty recognizes the unalienable right of States to develop peaceful uses of nuclear energy, this right is not without conditions. In the very terms of the Treaty, its exercise is conditioned by peaceful purposes, which respect commitments to non-proliferation and satisfactory implementation of the IAEA safeguards.

Mr. Chairman,

15. The development of nuclear energy presents critical challenges for our collective security. To ensure the security of all States, we must promote the responsible development of civil nuclear energy in a multilateral, transparent and stringent framework, based on consolidated international cooperation which guarantees that sensitive technologies and goods are not used for anything other than peaceful purposes.
16. This is not a question of choosing between development of nuclear energy and respect of non-proliferation obligations. Far from being antagonistic, these two pillars of the NPT are designed to mutually reinforce one another to allow the largest number possible to benefit from the possibilities of nuclear energy while guaranteeing collective security.
17. The philosophy of the international safeguards is based on a simple premise: the easier access to quality materials is made, the greater the risk of proliferation and therefore the more the international community must be vigilant in the dissemination of these technologies which, by their very nature, carry a greater risk.
18. This is also the thinking behind our nuclear export policy. France has defined a clear policy regarding the export of sensitive technologies: this distinguishes between, on the one hand, the supply of reactors based on non-proliferating technologies (light water reactors) and on the other hand, the supply of the fuel required for the operation and the export of enrichment and reprocessing cycle technologies. France undertakes **to export these sensitive technologies only under particular circumstances** that are economically and technically

justified for the beneficiary countries and which present no risk of weakening the international non-proliferation regime.

19. At the same time, we would like to promote credible alternatives to the development of national capacities for the enrichment and reprocessing which any State that hopes to develop a nuclear-power programme must be able to call upon. The international initiatives which have been proposed throughout the last few years are designed to respond to this need for guaranteeing permanent access to these markets. As such, we can congratulate ourselves that on December 8<sup>th</sup> of last year, under the French presidency, the Council of the European Union took the decision to contribute the sum of €25M to the setting up of a "fuel bank" under the auspices of the IAEA and on condition of the decision by the Board of Governors.

Mr. Chairman,

20. Our security also depends on the ability of those States which have chosen civil nuclear energy to carry out their projects in compliance with the most exacting **safety and security conditions**.
21. In particular, France intends to help countries that wish to acquire nuclear-power capabilities to implement the framework and infrastructures necessary for the safe and efficient development of nuclear energy. We must be aware that commitment to a civil nuclear programme is a long-term choice, which requires a suitable environment and therefore implies a special responsibility on behalf of the States concerned.
22. Furthermore, France has set up a specialist body, the *AFNI (Agence France Nucléaire Internationale - French International Nuclear Agency)*, to assist countries in gaining access to nuclear energy with the implementation of the infrastructures necessary for the safe and efficient development of civil nuclear energy, with priority given to the **training and development of human resources in the nuclear field**.  
To this end, and in the interests of maximum efficiency, the French authorities intend, in direct collaboration with the IAEA, to harmonize as much as possible the bilateral cooperation and multilateral aid the Agency offers in compliance with its statute.

Mr. Chairman,

23. The final requirement is that of **transparency**. Nuclear development cannot be envisaged without political will and the backing of citizens. For its part, my country is determined to pursue the work of transparency which it has already begun. In application of our international commitments, the export of nuclear material is subject to government authorization. France intends to develop its international cooperation in complete transparency, while strictly complying with its international obligations. In accordance with the terms of the EURATOM Treaty, our agreements are subject to approval from the European Commission and, once ratified, they are **published**. Their contents are therefore in the public domain.

24. The development of nuclear energy will be one of the outstanding achievements of this century. We must work together, as of now, to promote the responsible development of nuclear energy which will enable the community of nations to provide answers to the formidable economic, human and environmental challenges which lie ahead.
25. This development is tied to the creation of a climate of trust between all participants. To achieve this, guarantees are necessary on the four foundations on which this challenge rests: pursuing a peaceful programme in good faith, compliance with the commitments of non-proliferation, a very high level of safety and security and, finally, the utmost transparency.
26. Only the implementation of large-scale international cooperation in a climate of confidence and transparency will enable the greatest possible number of countries to benefit from the peaceful applications of this energy of the future.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman,