

Statement by Mr. Prakash Javadekar, Member of Parliament, on agenda item-50: Effects of Atomic Radiation at the Fourth Committee of the 66th United Nations General Assembly on October 21, 2011.

At the outset, on behalf of my delegation, let me congratulate you Madam Chair and all members of the Bureau, for the manner in which you have conducted the work of the Committee. We also wish you all the best of success in future.

Madam Chair,

We also express our deep appreciation for the excellent work done by the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) in analyzing the sources and effects of radiation exposure on man and the environment, world-wide. We commend the Committee's Draft Report to the General Assembly, which is evidence of its methodical approach on crucial issues of radiation exposure and its possible environmental impact.



India welcomes the Committee's proposal to prepare a scientific report on the radiological consequences of the nuclear accident in the Fukushima-Daiichi power plant, following the great earthquake and Tsunami in East Japan. Initial estimates of exposure and radioactive contamination are available, and need to be updated constantly. While we believe that the radiological consequences of this episode may not be as far-reaching or of a magnitude comparable to those of Chernobyl, however drawing upon the experience of Chernobyl, it is necessary to create a multidisciplinary, multi-institutional framework for collection and analysis of the voluminous data.

Madam Chair,

While welcoming the offer from the Member States to share their data with the scientific committee and appreciating the persistent demands to monitor the radioactive contamination in the wake of Fukushima, India recognizes that this is a difficult and demanding task in terms of availability of trained human resources.

Madam Chair,

We would like to place on record our appreciation of the Committee's efforts to develop a scientific document on 'Attributability of Health Effects to Ionizing Radiation' and 'Uncertainties in risk estimates for cancer due to radiation exposure'. We would like to underline that the Committee, in its report to the 65th General Assembly, has accepted that there is no epidemiological or experimental evidence for increased incidence of cancer for a dose of 100 mSv (millisievert). We therefore hope that the issue of Linear no Threshold (LNT) as a basis for stipulating the limits of radiation exposure to occupational workers and the general public, will be revisited.

Madam Chair,

The UNSCEAR also deserves to be complimented for undertaking the development of some other very relevant scientific annexes, namely the methodology for estimating radiation exposure due to discharges, biological effects of internal emitters and radiation exposure from different options for electricity generation. We hope that these documents, after their publication, would facilitate informed decision-making by UN Member States. As India is emerging as a major user of electricity generated from nuclear power plants, the safety of our citizens is our top priority.

The collection of reliable data, which requires support of different agencies in the Member States, is crucial to the Committee's work. In this regard, we would like to mention that the data collection format should not be too elaborate, and the form in which this information is conveyed to the public should be such that it does not create a fear psychosis.

Madam Chair,

India appreciates the Committee's initiative to prepare a scientific annexe on epidemiology related to the environmental sources at low doses. We are pleased to mention that the Committee will be taking note of the published work from India and China on cancer, as well as biological and genetic effects in high background radiation areas which do not show excessive positive risk. India shall be happy to share its data on the biological and genetic studies in high-level natural radiation areas of Kerala.

Medical radiation exposure is becoming a major source of exposure, depending on the healthcare level of a country. In this regard, we welcome the publication of UNSCEAR's 2008 report on Medical Radiation Exposures.

Madam Chair,

India believes that the UNSCEAR, with its present composition, is doing outstanding work in its mandated area. Therefore, while appreciating the demand

for expansion of membership of the committee, we would like to emphasize that the membership of the committee should not exceed a practical limit, in view of financial and logistic considerations in organizing its sessions with a large membership.

Madam Chair,

Let me conclude by seconding the resolution on Effects of Atomic Radiation, while also strongly recommending that sufficient financial resources be made available to the UNSCEAR for its effective functioning.

Thank you Madam Chair.

[BACK TO TABLE OF CONTENTS](#)