

Transcript of Event with IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano

Mike Vandusen:

Good morning, and welcome to the Wilson Center, and a special welcome to our guest this morning, Yukiya Amano of the International Atomic Energy Agency, the IAEA. I'm Mike Vandusen [spelled phonetically] Executive Vice President. Modern technology kept our president and CEO, Jane Harman, on the tarmac in New York City, or rather LaGuardia Airport for over two hours this morning. She has just landed and will be here shortly and will make a closing comment. She apologizes but we wanted to get started. The Wilson Center is a public/private institution created by an act of Congress. It serves as the official national memorial to the 28th president. We tackle global issues through independent research, open dialogue, and actionable ideas. We seek to provide safe political space for addressing key public policy issues. Nuclear proliferation issues are a lean of excellence for the Center. Our nuclear proliferation international history project is a global network of individuals and institutions engaged in the study of international nuclear history through archival documents, oral history interviews, and other empirical sources.

The Wilson Center has very strong ties with the Los Alamos National Laboratory, Joe Pelot [spelled phonetically] from the lab is here this morning. The Wilson Center has followed the nuclear talks on Iran especially closely and recently had two international ground truth briefings on these talks. Conversations with experts in the field. And we're very proud to have Michael Adler on the podium here as a senior scholar at the Wilson Center. Michael was the Agence France-Presse correspondent in Vienna covering the IAEA for years, and he is now writing a book on the Iranian nuclear negotiations. Michael will moderate today's session.

DG Amano, as I gather he is called in the corridors of Vienna, is here to help us understand the IAEA, how the -- help us understand how the IAEA is helping preserve the nuclear non-proliferation treaties grand bargain. He is uniquely qualified to do so. His career spanned 36 years in the Japanese Foreign Ministry and he has served with the IAEA since about -- since the 1990s. He played a key role in securing an agreement to shut down Chernobyl's unit number three as chair of the G7 Nuclear Safety Group in the

year 2000. And was chair of the IAEA Board of Governors when the agency won the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005. Please join me in welcoming Director General Amano. Michael Adler -- Director General Amano will speak briefly and then Michael Adler will have a dialogue with our guests for approximately 15, 20 minutes, preserving half the time for your questions. Thank you for coming to the Wilson Center this morning. Director General.

[applause]

Yukiya Amano:

Good morning, everyone. It is a great pleasure for me to be invited and given the opportunity to speak to you. I had meetings with some high U.S. officials yesterday and today I'm delighted to meet Michael again whom I know very long and I can know very well about the IAEA.

Four years have past since I joined the IAEA in 2009, and today I would like to explain a little bit about the activities of the IAEA. The IAEA is known as a nuclear watch dog, especially in media, but I would like to say that the IAEA's activities is much more extensive than a mere nuclear watch dog. For example, we are very unique stakeholder to obtain that millennium development goals. Just for an example, cancer is very serious problem in developing countries. Some people think that cancer is a problem in developed countries; it is totally wrong, because 2,000 death by cancer occur in developing countries. And many countries in Africa do not have even single therapy machine, radium nuclear therapy machine, in their country. They come to the clinic too late, and it is not possible to provide life-saving treatment. This is very unfair, and I am insisting that cancer control in developing countries should be established as a global health agenda. The nuclear technology can contribute a lot to save lives in developing countries.

Everyone knows that in the coming years and decades, food shortage will be a serious as the world population expands. And here too, the nuclear technology can contribute by accelerating the plant mutation by applying radiation. We can prolong the shelf life of food or we can eliminate the toxicity from the food. Water can be better managed by analyzing the aquifer by using nuclear technology, and the IAEA has a huge project in sub-Sahara countries to better understand the water resource and its use. If I keep on

talking about these things, it becomes endless, so I stop here. But the point of that IAEA has the technology, we have the function transfer, and encourage people to use it safely. IAEA is a unique player to contribute to the promotion of millennium development goals and its follow up.

I never thought that there would be such a huge nuclear accident during my tenure in Japan. I had to use lots of time and energy to address this issue. If you have interest, I will come back to this issue, but the IAEA adopted action plan to improve -- to enhance the safety of nuclear power globally. Action plan is now implementation, and I can say that nuclear power plants are safer now compared to on the time before Fukushima Daiichi accident. Despite the belief or on the suspicion of some people, many countries continue to include nuclear power as an option in their energy mix. Of course on the non-proliferation [unintelligible] is one of the important tasks of the IAEA. We are providing a regular report on Iran, Syria, and DPLK. These are different and complicated issues, in particular Iranian nuclear issue is a very complicated one. But when I joined the agency, I -- now it's a very simple standard, every country needs to implement the comprehensive safeguard verification agreement between IAEA and member [unintelligible] and other relevant obligations, if there are any. I mean for example that United Nations Security Council Resolutions. This is a universal standard and all of the countries, including Iran, to need abide by.

By this standard, I can say that the material and facilities placed under safeguards in Iran are staying in peaceful purpose. But as some additional protocol and obligations are not implemented, we cannot give the assurance that all the activities in Iran is in peaceful purpose. We had long negotiations with Iran in recent years, but in October -- on October 28th and 9th -- 29th of this month, we had our meeting with Iran. In fact, after the coming of President Rouhani, we have carefully observed -- we had a meeting with a new president of atomic agency organization of Iran, Mr. Salani [spelled phonetically] and we had two meetings and on the 28th and 29th. And we did have a very productive meeting, and I'm sure that you have interest and I will come back to this issue.

On Syria: in 2011, I drew conclusions that the facility that was destroyed is very -- was very likely a nuclear

reactor that should be reported to the IAEA and we are very confident that our conclusion is correct. They remain some facilities that we would like to clarify and while Syria commits to cooperate with us fully, no follow up has been made so far. But we also need to understand that Syria is in a very difficult situation.

DPLK viewing from Vienna, Iran is the most important and the only issue. I come from other part of the world, Japan, and seeing from Tokyo or Asia, this issue of North Korea is also a very serious issue. In one sense the situation is worse because they have declared to have withdrawn from the [unintelligible], expelled all the inspectors, and detonated nuclear weapons. But one positive thing in that with respect to DPLK there's a framework of dialogue, six parties talk, it is quite [unintelligible] framework. It is not functioning now but countries are working formally and informally to reactivate this process.

The IAEA is ready to send back our inspectors and we believe that we have an essential role to play in the verification of the denuclearization of Korean peninsula. There are many others that I would like to mention, but let me say that IAEA is an organization with multiple objectives. Essentially, it is a technical organization, but we are working in a very highly political environment. Some -- now I will stop and be happy to converse with Michael and later, take your questions. Thank you very much.

Michael Adler:

Thank you, DG. It is a honor and privilege for me to and for the Wilson Center to be hosting Mr. Amano. Mr. Amano is one of the first people I interviewed when I came to Vienna as a journalist just over a decade ago, when he was Japan's Ambassador to the U.N. Nuclear Agency. We have remained friendly and in touch since then. Director General Amano next month's the second term as head of IAEA after taking the helm in 2009. He has stamped the agency with his own style in the plain talking and calling it like it is. In that spirit, I hope we can have a good session with my questions and with the audiences.

So first I want to -- getting -- following on this meeting which you had with Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Abbas Araqchi, and then there was a meeting of the two sides.

The atmosphere of the talks, as you said, was better, but the question is, when will we see concrete progress such as a visit to the Parchin site?

Yukiya Amano:

Yes, some -- we had a meeting with Iran on the 28th and 29th of October. This is the second meeting between Iran and IAEA after Mr. Rouhani became the president. And the first one took place towards the end of September, it was a get-to-know-each-other meeting. Last meeting was a very productive meeting, and there was some -- it was productive and there was some product development and important thing that there was a change. You said that there was a change of tone, yes. There was -- there has been a change of tone since the coming of from President Rouhani, but in the last meeting, there was some real change. I would like to mean that Iran made the proposal and it contains some substance and the Iranian proposal is based on step-by-step approach. Iran and IAEA agreed to resolve all the present and past issues through cooperation and dialogue. The next step will be -- now we are working -- I mean, IAEA and Iran, are now working on the new proposal and we -- and carry forward into November meeting.

If agree, sometime in the future it will be a step forward but by no means it means the end of the process and much more needs to be done. This is where we stand now.

Michael Adler:

You say that there was real progress made, you have one -- you have several key demands. One, is that you be able to go to Parchin and the problem there is that a site which once was container in the open now has a shed over it, it's not certain if the container is still there, and it actually asphalted over the ground. So the question is will they finally let you go there, and if you go, can you find anything? And then there's the other question which you differed with them in the step-by-step approach, you want to be able to go back and ask questions at any time. Iran wants one file to be closed, you move on, you can't go back to the file, and you have problems with that in a previous work plan. Those are substantial issues which get to the heart of your being able to be effective. So besides this change in tone, will you be able to be effective on those issues and on others?

Yukiya Amano:

First question is about Parchin, and this is a part of the issue which we call issues with possible military dimension. In the report on Iran that I issued in November 2011, we have identified 12 areas where we need clarification from Iran. Parchin is one of these 12 areas. We have agreed that all the issues will be resolved through cooperation and dialogue, and the access to Parchin will be dealt with as part of the process but we are now working on all the issues and how to move forward.

Regarding the question whether we can go back to the place again or not, we have not discussed that much in details this time, but the basic agreement that we will resolve all the issues through cooperation and dialogue, and this is very important and there's a basic agreement.

Michael Adler:

Okay, so I wish you luck in going forward and I hope you can make some progress. Another question about Iran: are you currently inspecting Iran in full enough way to be able to detect any breakout effort to make enough weapon grade uranium for a bomb, or would Iran have two weeks say between inspections where they could do this undetected?

Yukiya Amano:

As far as the facilities that are placed under safeguard, we are quite confident that we can find any changes or deviation in a reasonable amount of time. For the -- if there was any facility that is not undeclared, we don't have that assurance.

Michael Adler:

And are you concerned that since you had not been applying the additional protocol since 2006, that they would be able to be hiding things from you elsewhere?

Yukiya Amano:

Application of additional protocol is essential and very helpful for us to have better understanding without there is or there is not undeclared activities, and the implementation of additional protocols will give us more confidence on the peaceful nature of Iranian activities.

Michael Adler:

The advance centrifuges they have, which they've installed in the times, they haven't put nuclear material in them

yet, or as of the last report. How good are those centrifuges? Do you think that they'll work?

Yukiya Amano:

We don't know yet. As they are not operating, we can't tell how effective they are, but the main purpose of our inspection is not to verify how little effective they are. Our main objective is to verify that the material and facilities stay in peaceful activities.

Michael Adler:

And regarding PMD which is a huge sticking point, is the agency's aim to uncover details of all alleged PMD activities, or simply to verify that Iran is no longer engaged in such activities?

Yukiya Amano:

We would like to seek -- we are seeking clarification to Iran and we would like to clarify that present and past activities, how far we can go, how far we can detect? It depends, we have not started so we cannot tell for sure what will happen, but it is essential that Iran cooperate with us to clarify these issues.

Michael Adler:

If Iran cleared up the past, would they get a sort of amnesty? In other words, could they come forward if they clear up the past and there wouldn't be measures against them for this, it would just be one step towards going towards a deal or would there have to be some kind of sanction? I realize that's a bad choice of words but --

Yukiya Amano:

In resolving the Iran nuclear issues, there are two route. One is the IAEA Iran route and another is the P5 Plus One or EU3 Plus Three Route. These two routes are different, independent, and separate. In the route between Iran and IAEA, the main focus is on verification. Therefore, we would like to see the implementation of additional protocol, more timely provision of information which is called modified implementation of modified code 3.1 but simply it means timely provision of information about the Iranian nuclear activities. And [unintelligible] and the clarification of possible [unintelligible] dimension, the parties that attend these talks are Iran and IAEA too.

On the other hand, the P5 Plus One or EU3 dialogue is dealing with the lifting -- possible lifting of some functions. Possible limitation of [unintelligible] activities, as I understand, and the parties involved are different, three countries are from EU, Russia, China, and United States, and they are associating with Iran. An important meeting will take place on the 7th and 8th of November next month.

Michael Adler:

As you pointed out, the two tracks are really separate from each other, but hasn't Iran said very clearly, actually, that there can be no progress in Vienna until there's progress with the P5 Plus One, and doesn't this inject an element of politicizing the IAEA which stymies your work?

Yukiya Amano:

I haven't had that since President Rouhani started. In the past -- there was some indication, sometimes there was an indication, sometimes there was no indication. But I can tell you that after the coming of President [unintelligible] we had a number of [unintelligible] with them, including my meeting with Mr. Salahei [spelled phonetically], Mr. Alakutci [spelled phonetically], but we haven't heard this linkage.

Michael Adler:

So that would be a truly substantial change, if that's the case?

Yukiya Amano:

I think so. There is some substance in the new proposal by Iran. And we would like to carry forward in the next meeting, scheduled on the 12th -- 11th of November.

Michael Adler:

You arrived here in Washington, you met with Secretary Kerry --

Yukiya Amano:

Yes.

Michael Adler:

And you met with Susan Rice at the White House. What are they telling you about how they see hopes for progress in Iran? And what are they telling you about DIA and how they

feel you're doing?

Yukiya Amano:

We have -- I have met with Secretary Kerry and Susan Rice, as well as others. And we have discussed the Iran nuclear issues [unintelligible] or with other support to the peaceful activity, peaceful application of nuclear power, a wide range of issues. And I sense the strong support to the activities of the IAEA, but it's not diplomatic practice, and not to talk about the ongoing discussions.

[laughter]

Michael Adler:

Did they give you any idea about the upcoming talks in Geneva?

Yukiya Amano:

Upcoming talks in Geneva, not much. There is [unintelligible] discussion has just started taking place in Vienna, and a B5 Plus One is preparing for them next meeting. But I don't have much to report to you on this issue.

Michael Adler:

Just two quick questions and then I'll turn it over to the audience. The first is on Syria. How intact are those sites? Have they been affected by the civil war? Is there still a place you can go and do proper verification?

Yukiya Amano:

In Syria, we have the so-called military neutral source reactor [spelled phonetically] that has some small amount of high enriched uranium, and that is undoubted IAEA safeguard. We visit that facility regularly, and that facility is staying peaceful activities. Recently, we haven't visited because of the obvious reasons, but we don't have any indication that things are getting worse.

Michael Adler:

And at the other three sites, that you want to go to?

Yukiya Amano:

The three sites are not [unintelligible] we have two different things. One is the Syrian nuclear facility and safeguards. And the military neutral source reactor is the other one that I mentioned, is under safeguard. There is

another issue of destroyed facility located on the place called Diya Azul [spelled phonetically]. We drew a conclusion that it is very likely that it was a nuclear reactor. But a nuclear reactor does not exist independently. And we have an interest in a very fine, functionally-related facilities. There are three. But these facilities are not under safeguard. We need new [unintelligible] with them to have access to them. And we have not yet had access to these facilities. We don't know how these facilities are for now.

Michael Adler:

And do you know if any of them have been affected by the fighting?

Yukiya Amano:

We don't know.

Michael Adler:

You don't know. Just my last question: on North Korea, you explained very well the situation. My question is if and when the IAEA returns to North Korea, what would be the verification approach given that a continuity of knowledge has been lost? And would safeguard inspections be enough, or must you return to North Korea with tools like the additional protocol, for wider inspections?

Yukiya Amano:

According to the United Nations Security Council Resolutions, North Korea has to implement all the IAEA safeguards. But the reality of that, North Korea has declared to have withdrawn from the NPT. There is some argument on the [unintelligible] of withdrawal. But the reality [unintelligible] North Korea is not acting as a member of the NPT.

It is also clear that North Korea has withdrawn from the IAEA, and North Korea is not a member of the IAEA. So in order to do any activities in North Korea, we need, first, a political agreement among the major stakeholders, and we need the consent from the Board of Governors. That means the policy-making body of the IAEA.

What can we do with respect to North Korea? I think the first step that we can take is a small step. Perhaps I will send back our inspectors to Yongbyon [spelled phonetically] where they exist the nuclear facilities.

This will be a small step, but I think it has a lot of meaning. And when we had the inspector Yongbyon up to April 2009, we had better knowledge. Now, we continue to monitor, but our knowledge is deteriorating. The next first step that we need to take is to send back inspectors to Yongbyon.

Michael Adler:

Okay, thank you very much. And I would like to open up questions to the audience. Members of the press, please hold your fire, we will have a press conference later. And when you ask a question, please wait for the microphone to be passed to you. State your name and affiliation, and as always, please ask a question. We don't have much time. We want to get as many questions in as possible, so no speeches.

Female Speaker:

Thank you very much. One of the P5 Plus One goals is to secure more quote-on-quote "intrusive inspections by the IAEA." What would these more intrusive inspections involve, and what is it that you need to do that you are not doing now?

Yukiya Amano:

As this is the issue discussed in P5 Plus One, I cannot give a definite answer. But when we say "intrusive answer," basically it means the measures contained in the additional protocol. Additional protocol is the more intrusive the verification measures than the normal comprehensive safeguard agreement. But intrusive inspection can mean more, more than the measures included in the additional protocol, and sometimes it is needed. Did I [unintelligible] did I answer your question?

Male Speaker:

Thank you, Director General Amano, and welcome to the Wilson Center. I'd like to ask a question with sort of a broader optic and timeframe. The discussion up to now has been on specific countries of concern. More broadly looking ahead, there will be an expansion of nuclear energy for energy security reasons, and because it is the primary source of low-carbon energy going forward.

How will that expansion of nuclear energy, notwithstanding the setback that there has been in Japan with the Fukushima reactor problem, but broadly, if advanced industrial

societies in developing countries will increase reliance on nuclear energy, how can that expansion be accomplished without creating proliferation risks? And what does that, in turn, mean for the IAEA's mission, its resources? Could you just address that broader situation?

Yukiya Amano:

Okay. According to the latest estimates of this summer, there will be an increase of the use of nuclear power by 2030. Lowest scenario would be an increase of 17 percent, 1-7, and the highest scenario will be 90, 9-0 percent. So, we will foresee that there would be a steady increase of the use of nuclear power. What does it mean for us? It will certainly increase the workload of inspection. Therefore, we are doing maximum efforts to rationalize and make that inspection more effective and efficient with the same amount of money. We cannot expect a big increase of funds in the coming years at least.

Another very important thing that we are doing with countries, especially so-called newcomers, is to recommend them to follow the steps that we call milestone documents. Embarking on nuclear power is a huge project. It takes long years, and it requires meticulous preparation. In one word, countries that want to embark on nuclear power need to strengthen nuclear infrastructure. By nuclear infrastructure, I mean the ratification of major convention, international conventions, established regularly between bodies, enacted domestic laws, and training people, capacity building, and make up a good selection of site and technology. We have identified 19 steps to prepare for the embarking of nuclear power, and we are assisting these countries.

I would like to be sure that we are not encouraging or discouraging the use of nuclear power. But if countries use nuclear power, they must use it safely, securely, and without increasing the risk of proliferation. By these efforts, I hope that these countries can use nuclear power without increasing the risk of proliferation.

Michael Adler:
Over here, please.

Benjamin Tour:
Good afternoon, Mr. Amano, I'm Benjamin Tour [spelled phonetically], a retired diplomat. Mr. Amano, can you

speak to the nature of the IAEA's contacts with Israeli officials, senior and not-so-senior, and visits by IAEA officials to Israel?

Yukiya Amano:

We have regular relations, regular contact with the ambassador in Vienna. I visited Israel, and the senior staff through the general conference. The general conference is the most important meeting of the IAEA, and that takes place in September. And also, for example, when I attend other meetings, like [unintelligible] or Munich Security Conference, I have contact with the senior officials of Israel. We have regular and normal contact with Israel, and I believe that is helpful to have good communication with Israel.

Michael Adler:

I'll come back here, just [unintelligible] furthest one back there.

Sarah Williams:

Thank you, Sara Williams from the Partnership for Global Security. I wanted to ask about -- if you could speak a little bit to the IAEA's role in the nuclear security summit process, and that has developed over the years, and where you see that going following that we expect to be the last summit in Washington in 2016, thank you.

Yukiya Amano:

The first big event for me after I joined the IAEA was to attend the Nuclear Security Summit, held in Washington in 2009. I was tasked to make a presentation in front of President Obama. And I was thrilled, and I was excited, I was frightened. But I could survive. After that, I regularly attend the Nuclear Security Summit, and we make our input. The IAEA has a central role in strengthening the nuclear security. We have the information, and we have the capacity to analyze. We have the illicit trafficking database.

This year, we have already had 400 [unintelligible] information on the illicit trafficking of [unintelligible] and radioactive materials. Information is very important. We have the capacity to help countries by -- in capacity building or donation of equipment. We can train people, and we can establish standards like nuclear security and guidance. Through all of these efforts, we can strengthen

the nuclear security in a concrete manner. We make our input to the Nuclear Security Summit, and the summit participants give guidance and instruction to the government staff in their own countries to strengthen the nuclear security [unintelligible].

One of the areas that we are focusing is the entry into force of the amendment of the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. This is a complicated name, but we call it CPPNM, and its amendment. The Convention itself has entered into force, but its scope is limited. Mainly, it is applied to ocean transport, sea transport. The amendment expands the scope. If the amendment enters into force, the nuclear [unintelligible] for example, on the land, can be covered by this convention. So we are promoting the entry into force of the CPPNM amendment, and with that, we believe that we can enhance the, we can strengthen the nuclear security.

IAEA has held a huge meeting at ministerial levels on nuclear security in July of this year. It was attended by 1,200 people. That was one of the biggest meetings of the IAEA, and it will continue to hold these conferences, and will strengthen nuclear security office to promote it to a division.

Michael Adler:
[unintelligible]

Male Speaker:
Hello, my name is [unintelligible] Kim, and I'm --

Barbara Slaven:
Sorry, thanks very much. Barbara Slaven [spelled phonetically] from the Atlantic Council, welcome to Washington. My understanding of the Iranian proposals is that they want to keep the facilities that they currently have and perhaps even build new nuclear infrastructure. But in return, they would provide much greater transparency. Is that also your understanding, and as part of that transparency, do you understand that the Iranians would agree to 24 hour monitoring with remote cameras? Thank you.

Michael Adler:
Barbara, you mean that there would be live streaming back

to Vienna, right? So it wouldn't be picking up cartridges, it would actually be 24/7.

Yukiya Amano:

In the IAEA, Iran ruled, we are not discussing that much details at this stage. We have agreed to resolve all of the issues through cooperation and dialogue. All issues mean current and past. And Iran made that proposal based on a step-by-step approach. And it contains some substance. We are working on them, and we'll carry it to the November 11th meeting, and we'll see.

Michael Adler:

Darrell?

Darrell Kimbell:

Thank you, Darrell Kimbell, Arms Control Association, good to see you. I have a question about special inspections. Under the Conference of Safeguard Security [unintelligible] that Iran has, and other countries, the agency, as I understand, does have the option to conduct a special inspection. So my question to you is, with reference to the questions about protect-- military dimensions, has the agency considered this? Could it be useful in resolving either the current or the past questions about those activities? And then, on technical cooperation, the agency provides a lot of technical cooperation to states regarding nuclear energy. We had a question about that before. What steps is the agency taking to ensure that that technical cooperation does not provide assistance to nuclear weapons programs? For instance, Pakistan has gotten technical assistance for uranium mining, as well as heavy water reactor operations. And it has used uranium mining and heavy water facilities to produce plutonium. So what assurances can you provide that that technical cooperation is not directly or indirectly assisting in the manufacture of nuclear weapons?

Yukiya Amano:

We are giving this technical cooperation to the facility that is under safeguard. We are not assisting military activities at all. And for the countries that have not yet embarked on nuclear power, we are helping them to adhere to the Conventions to establish the regulatory system, safeguard system, and help them in every way to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. For the special inspections, certainly special inspections is a tool

available in the IAEA Comprehensive Safeguard Agreement. But it has some conditions. And we can call for special inspection, and special circumstances. And it was called for in case of North Korea, and Romania. And the case was a bit different. But I'm not throwing away of other cases in which we have called for special inspections.

Michael Adler:

We're not that successful with North Korea --

Yukiya Amano:

When we called for special inspections, they declared to withdraw from the NPT.

Michael Adler:

Very nice, negative reactions. In the middle, please.

Justin Anderson:

Thank you. Justin Anderson, SEIC, Director General. I wonder if you could comment on the general state of health, from your perspective, and from the IAEA's perspective, of the additional protocol, both as a framework and also as it's been implemented with specific countries. Additional protocol approach has been around for a few years now. How do you and the agency feel that it's worked in terms of strengthening your ability to safeguard nuclear materials? And if there's anything you would change in terms of the diplomacy part of it, or the technical or scientific aspects of it, what would you seek to change in the future? Thank you.

Yukiya Amano:

The immediate objective for us in the near future is to universalize additional protocol. We have invested lots of efforts in expanding the application or implementation of the additional protocol. When I joined the IAEA in 2009, there were 93 countries that implemented additional protocol. Now, 121 countries are implementing additional protocol. Additional protocol is essential to exclude the possibility of undeclared activities. And we would like to see more countries that will adhere to the additional protocol. Whether we can do more or not, I think that the priority for now, for us, is to universalize or expand the number of countries that implement additional protocol.

Michael Adler:

Unfortunately, truly unfortunately, because the questions

are excellent, every single one, we're going to break off the questions now, because our dear leader, Jane Harman [spelled phonetically] is going to speak. The honorable Jane Harman.

Jane Harman:

The dear leader reference is a little uncomfortable. But Mr. Amano, I regret that the air traffic control system in our country prevented me from welcoming you here, the front end of this. I'm Jane Harman, and before becoming President and CEO of the Wilson Center two and a half years ago, I served as a member of our Congress for nine terms, and I met with you in Vienna as part of a bipartisan congressional delegation in January 2010, just after you had assumed your responsibilities as the Director General.

We in Congress at the time knew three things about you, and they still apply. Number one, we knew how competent you are from your years as Chair of the Board of Governors of the IAEA. Number two, we knew about your straight talk. I think everyone here in this high-level audience has heard all of that. And number three, we knew about your willingness to take strong action, all of which are essential, as the IAEA goes forward in an extremely dangerous world. Now, you described three countries. There probably are others that could be on a longer list. But you honor us by making the Wilson Center your only public stop after the P5 Plus One conference since the election of President Rouhani. And you honor us by taking our questions and letting us showcase some of our ace scholars here, like Hala S. Fandiari, who's head of our Middle East Program, and Rob Lidvac, who is our vice president for scholars, and the wonderful rock star Michael Adler, who contributes so much.

Everyone agrees, right, to this subject of trying to understand Iran's intentions and trying to make the soundest policy choices. So I want to thank you, and I want to remind everyone that when President Wilson accepted the Nobel Peace Prize in 1919, by letter, he presciently wrote that the cause of peace will be a continuing labor. Almost 100 years later, the cause of peace is a continuing labor, and a reason that I hope we will make progress is because we have the IAEA under very strong leadership, your leadership. Thank you very much and thank all of you very much for coming.

[applause]

Michael Adler:

This concludes our program. I would like to thank Director General Amano for coming. It was a great privilege, and I think it was a great session with excellent questions. If everybody now would leave the auditorium, we have a press conference here. So if the press would come forward, thank you all very much.

Male Speaker:

Thank you very much. I'm from Japan HK [spelled phonetically]. My name is Tanaka [spelled phonetically]. Nice to see you, Mr. Amano. First of all, on North Korea, how do you feel close, you as an inspector, going back to Yongbyon?

Yukiya Amano:

How close --

Male Speaker:

Yes, you are feeling. And one more question of Fukushima. And when are you going to send your team to Fukushima power plant to investigate contaminated water? Thank you.

Yukiya Amano:

Okay. Regarding the question when IAEA go back to North Korea: the honest answer is we don't know. The reason is that in order to go back to North Korea, we need a basic political understanding, at least among the major stakeholders, and only based on this basic understanding we can take action. You may recall that North Korea is not a member of the IAEA, and when the IAEA takes action over a country that is not a member, we need support from the Board of Governors. Nevertheless, the IAEA Secretariat is prepared to go back any time. We maintain the level of training, we stay prepared, and when there is political agreement, we will seek the authorization from the board, and we'll send back our staff who are ready any time to be back. Next question, about the sending of the peer review missions of the IAEA related to the contaminated water. We are planning to send our peer review missions in autumn, perhaps towards the end of October. That is the IAEA mission on decommissioning, and it covers the contaminated water issues.

Male Speaker:

Excuse me. October finished.

Yukiya Amano:

Sorry. November, November. Sorry. November. The date is almost decided, but as I'm traveling, I'm not -- I don't have the latest information, but our plan is to send it at the end of October -- November, sorry.

Male Speaker:

Thank you.

Miho Takashima:

Hello. My name is Miho Takashima with Tokyo Broadcasting System. There are a lot of commercial satellites pretty much in the public scene that I -- the Yongbyon facility reactivated. Do you share that assessment? Can you, first of all, elaborate on the IAEA assessment, what is happening in Yongbyon, and how concerned are you with the status quo? Thank you.

Yukiya Amano:

We are -- from the media report on the observation of findings by the satellite imagery using commercial satellites, we are also following the issue through various means, but because of the nature of the issue, I am not able to discuss it, and I hope you understand it.

Michael Gordon:

Michael Gordon, New York Times. At the last meeting of the P5 PLUS ONE, it was noted there was a positive tone. The atmospherics were good. It was agreed that it was a kind of meeting that required follow-up, as indeed will happen next week. And it seems from your remarks that in the IAEA's dealings with Iran, there's also been a positive atmosphere that's going to result in follow-up, but what people are waiting for, and waiting to see, is whether this positive tone will yield concrete, specific steps that result either in increased monitoring of the Iranian program or some constraints on the current activity. From your perspective, from the IAEA perspective, what specific concrete steps are you -- would you like to achieve in the upcoming weeks and months that would signal progress in dealing with Iran? Something that went beyond atmospherics and positive discussions.

Yukiya Amano:

For us, it is important that additional protocol would be implemented, timely information about the nuclear facilities, activities of Iran will be provided, and some other issues with possible military dimension will be clarified. These are the whole set of issues that requires concrete measures. However, in practical terms, not everything can come overnight, and Iran proposed a step-by-step approach. And this proposal contains some substance. We are now working on that, and I will carry it to the November 11th meeting.

Michael Gordon:

Could I just ask a -- just a quick follow-up? Is the Iranian step-by-step -- their priorities they set out, in terms of how the process should work, is that -- do you think that that's the correct way to proceed or do you have your own ideas about how to proceed, and that's what remains to be discussed with them?

Yukiya Amano:

Our view is that there should be a basic agreement that all other issues of past and present should be resolved through cooperation and dialogue, and that all the issues and the dimensions should be clarified and implemented, but that is some process, and that is a process that cannot be done overnight. We are now working on them, and the measures I need to include include the transparency, timely provision, clarification of possible military dimensions.

Shaun Tandon:

Thanks. Shaun Tandon [spelled phonetically], colleague of my esteemed -- of the esteemed Michael [spelled phonetically] at AFP. Getting, as well, to Iran: with the upcoming meetings, you mentioned you can't get into the detail, but how important do you think these meetings will be? Is this potentially a make-or-break moment in terms of the diplomacy with Iran, or do you see this as just one stage? And related to that a bit, in the administration here in the U.S., there's been a call to -- not suspend sanctions, but to freeze movement to further sanctions. I realize the IAEA has a different role, but do you have any view on whether this is the time to be freezing those sanctions efforts -- the additional sanctions efforts?

Yukiya Amano:

We think we are in a very important period. We have been negotiating for quite a long time, but the negotiation went around in circles up to quite recently. And after the coming of President Rouhani, we see the first -- we see, first, a change of tone, change of atmosphere, and now we see some substance in their proposals. So we need to work seriously and constructively to work out an agreement. Regarding your question about the sanctions, the IAEA is not dealing with the sanctions. It is handled by -- addressed by the United Nations Security Councils, or in the P5 PLUS ONE or EU 3+3 talks. And the sanction is not under the competence of the IAEA.

Jeannie Nguyen:

Thank you, Director General. My name is Jeannie Nguyen [spelled phonetically] with Voice of Vietnamese Americans. With your capacity, your power, all you have done, thank you very much. Would you share with us the data we have on the nuclear capacity of China? Since I feel as China rising and we recognizing its global power, moving forward is the most important factors that the U.S. and the whole world knows about where China is, with its nuclear capacity, and its intention. And there's a small question tack onto the question earlier, that Vietnam is also getting into nuclear energy, not power, but Vietnam has tremendous problems with risk management, health, infrastructures, and all that. So is there anything that you can suggest with Vietnam or the U.N. to put in as a policy for all the similar nations to apply to implement when we getting more into the nuclear energy? Thank you.

Yukiya Amano:

I said that by 2030 there would be an increase by 17 percent, at the minimum, and 90 percent at the maximum. But geographically, the center of expansion is in Asia, and more specifically, China, India, and South Korea. So it is very clear that Asia, and in particular China, is the center of expansion of the use of nuclear power. I understand that China is very serious about ensuring safety and security, and China and IAEA are working in close cooperation.

Regarding Vietnam, Vietnam is also planning to embark on nuclear power. Again, IAEA and Vietnam are working very closely. We have work together, I have visited the country, and now the ambassador of Vietnam to Vienna is the

chairman of the board. And we are -- and we have been supporting and will continue to support Vietnam to strengthen that nuclear infrastructure to embark on nuclear power.

Fadi Mansour:

Thank you. Fadi Mansour with Al Jazeera Network. You may recall the red line set by Israeli prime minister last year at the U.N. regarding the ability of Iran to produce a nuclear weapon. Based on the expertise available to your agency, if the Iranians were to decide to produce nuclear weapon, how far do you think they are from achieving that goal? And if I may take a second shot at that question --

Yukiya Amano:

I didn't understand your question.

Fadi Mansour:

Do you have any kind of assessment if the Iranians were to decide to produce a nuclear weapon, how long it will take them to do that? The second question is, again on the issue of the sanctions, I guess I would like to rephrase it in a way to see if you think that any easing of the sanctions now would create a more positive atmosphere for negotiations between your agency and the Iranians? Thank you.

Yukiya Amano:

These two issues, and the prospect for -- and the time needed for Iran to develop nuclear weapon, and the effect from our sanctions, unfortunately these are not my field. How long it will take them to develop nuclear weapons, is your question, but our function is how we can ensure the activities stay in peaceful purpose. And we are not providing military outlook, and I hope you understand our function.

Also, regarding the sanction, we don't have the right of sanction in our statute and we are not negotiating or involved in the sanction-related issues. What we do is to send the inspectors to the ground, we verify and we share the information with member states to facilitate the decision by member states. We say that in the IAEA Iran route we had some constructive meeting. Iran made a proposal, which contains some substance, and we reported to them -- to the member states, and we share it with media.

It is other countries, member states, that need to make their policy.

Michael Adler:
Last question.

Male Speaker:
Hi, my name is Kobayashi [spelled phonetically] with Kyoto News of Japan, and I would like to make just one follow-up question on P5 PLUS ONE meeting about -- regarding the proposal for the process to building -- the mutual confidence-building. At this point did you expect the IAEA could be involved in verification process of the measure? Thank you.

Yukiya Amano:
IAEA has been involved in the verification from the beginning, and this is our work. And we are in charge of the verification of nuclear activities of Iran and the other countries, and we'll continue to do so. As I mentioned on the P5 PLUS ONE and IAEA Iran route are different route, and our main focus is on the verification.

Michael Adler:
Okay, thank you all very much for coming, and thank you, Dr. Amano.

Yukiya Amano:
Thank you very much.

[end of transcript]