



BELARUS

Check against delivery

High-level Meeting on Nuclear Safety and Security

22 September 2011

STATEMENT

by His Excellency Valentine Rybakov

**Assistant to the President of the Republic of Belarus
on Foreign Policy**

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Accident at the nuclear power plant in Japan stirred up a broad debate within the international community on the future of the nuclear power.

By virtue of many reasons Belarus can not stay out of this discussion. For us, you know, as for many other countries, the issue of sufficient energy supply is not just a topical issue. The economic development of the country and retaining independence of the state depend directly on it.

In the setting of limited hydrocarbon resources and a considerable rise in their world prices, development of an own nuclear power is in fact the only solution to the problem of ensuring energy security of Belarus and well-being of the Belarusian people.

It is clear that the tragedy of “Fukushima” puts into forefront the issue of safe use of nuclear power. For Belarus, which was affected the most by the accident at the Chernobyl Nuclear Power Plant 25 years ago, this problem is of particular sensitivity.

It is for that reason that safety became a major criterion for the Republic of Belarus when a decision was taken on the construction of its own Nuclear Power Plant. This factor was determining when choosing a potential partner, technical project and location for the plant. Verified and consistent actions of the state allowed achieve consensus in the Belarusian society on this issue.

Belarus takes most seriously its international obligations in the sphere of nuclear security and welcomes the efforts of the IAEA to enhance it. We stand for further improvement of international legal instruments in the nuclear field, the Convention on Nuclear Safety and the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident, in the first place, as well as the IAEA safety standards.

Distinguished Co-Chairs,

An inalienable part of nuclear security is the issue of non-proliferation of nuclear weapons as well as safety of nuclear materials. Together with the IAEA and other foreign partners we are efficiently carrying out the Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan.

Voluntary withdrawal by our country from its territory of nuclear weapons in 1994 as well as readiness in principle to get rid completely in the frames of an appropriate international

project of highly enriched nuclear materials, which are kept in Belarus are vivid examples of the responsible approach of the Republic of Belarus to the solution of these issues.

Unfortunately, through the fault of some foreign partners, we had to suspend the implementation of this project, which is vital for the whole European region. We can not agree on its further implementation in conditions when political and economic sanctions are imposed on Belarus. Such sanctions are a blatant and cynical violation of the international guarantees given to Belarus under the Budapest Memorandum of 5 December 1994, which clearly fixed that states-guarantors will “refrain from economic coercion designed to subordinate to their own interest the exercise by the Republic of Belarus of the rights inherent in its sovereignty and thus to secure advantages of any kind”.

Such a discrepancy between a word and a deed not only harms the whole process of nuclear security safeguarding but it also serves as a meaningful example for other states concerned. Isn't it this fact that gives rise to their suspicion and grounded doubts about more active participation in international initiatives in this field?

We are confident that there should be no place for such examples in the international community that for fair stands for strengthening of nuclear security. Multilateral cooperation in this field must be of responsible, equal and consistent nature. This is the only way we will be able to make the world safe and happy, and ensure the life of dignity to our peoples and future generations.

Thank you.