

IAEA Nobel Peace Prize Special Event on Human Resources  
Development in Radiation Oncology in the Context of Cancer Control  
Programmes  
4-8 December, 2006, Bangkok, Thailand

WELCOME REMARKS

by

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Honourable Minister for Science and Technology - Dr. Yongyut Yuthavong  
Honourable Minister for Public Health – Dr. Mongkol Na Songkla  
Dr. Chouvana Rodthongkom, Secretary General, Office of Atom for Peace  
Dr. Piyasakol Sakolsatayadorn, Dean, Faculty of Medicine, Siriraj Hospital Mahidol  
University  
Dr. P.T. Jawawickramarajah, WHO Representative in Thailand  
Dr. Peter Boyle, Director, International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC)  
Dr. Malcolm Moore, Head, Asia Regional Office of the International Union Against  
Cancer (UICC)  
Dr. Massoud Samiei, Head, IAEA's Office of the Programme of Action for Cancer  
Therapy (PACT)  
Distinguished Participants  
Ladies and Gentlemen:

1. On behalf of the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and on my own behalf, I join the host country Thailand in welcoming you all to IAEA Nobel Peace Prize Special Event on Human Resources Development in Radiation Oncology in the Context of Cancer Control Programmes, which is jointly organized by the Office of Atom for Peace (OAP), Siriraj Hospital and the IAEA. I convey to you our best wishes for a successful event.

2. I wish to thank the Government of Thailand for accepting to host this important event in this wonderful country, and for the warm hospitality accorded to us all. To the IAEA, the Government of Thailand remains a reliable partner in our common objective to promote the peaceful application of nuclear technology for sustainable development. I wish to take this opportunity to convey our congratulations to the people of Thailand on the occasion of His Majesty's Birthday.

3. I also wish to thank our international partners in the fight against cancer – the World Health Organisation (WHO), the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), and the International Union Against Cancer (UICC) for their excellent collaboration.

4. As you are aware, transfer of nuclear technology for peaceful use is one of the key functions of the IAEA – which, together with promotion of safety and security

of nuclear materials, and verification for non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, constitute the “three pillars” of the IAEA in line with its Statute.

5. For over 25 years the IAEA, through its Technical Cooperation Programme, has been a leading international organization providing developing Member States with radiation technology and training to diagnose treat and palliate cancer. The Agency currently has cancer related programmes in about 100 countries and spends over \$15 million per year in the area of radiotherapy and nuclear medicine.

6. The significant rise in the incidence of cancer in the developing world which accounts for about 70% of all cancer related death in the world is becoming a major health challenge and has resulted in an increased number of requests from Member States to the Agency for Technical Cooperation projects relating to cancer control.

7. Following the 2005 Nobel Peace Prize to the IAEA and its Director General Dr. Mohamed ElBaradei, the IAEA Board of Governors subsequently decided that the IAEA’s share of the prize money would be used to create a special fund to improve cancer management and childhood nutrition in the developing world. This fund is known as the “*IAEA Nobel Peace Prize for Cancer and Nutrition Fund* “. As stated by the IAEA Director General, Mohamed ElBaradei, “The Fund will be used to maximize the Agency’s ability to build capacity and transfer the needed know-how to developing countries.” The Board also agreed to use the Fund to provide practical training in radiation oncology and cancer control to contribute to the implementation of Agency’s programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT), which was established in 2004. The overall objectives of PACT are to strengthen national programmes for cancer control in developing Member States and enable health sector institutions of these countries to introduce and/or improve their cancer care capability by integrating radiotherapy into a comprehensive cancer control programme which includes prevention, early detection and diagnosis and palliative care to maximize its therapeutic effectiveness and impact. You will be hearing more this morning on the PACT from Dr. Massoud Samiei, Head of the IAEA PACT Office.

8. Accordingly, and in order to make the most effective use of the Fund, three Regional Cancer Training Institutes in Africa, Asia, and Latin America are being established. These institutes are intended to lay foundation for the establishment of Regional Cancer Training Networks, which will provide comprehensive and multidisciplinary training covering all relevant cancer control professionals needed for an effective and sustainable cancer control programme in member states.

9. As a precursor to the establishment of such a training institute in Asia and the Pacific, this Special Regional Event is being organised with the aims to (1) achieve full recognition of the magnitude and the many facets of cancer in Asia, (2) agree on a coherent and achievable regional plan of action for building the necessary capacity to enable the Asian countries to manage cancers efficiently, and (3) adopt concrete short-term plans for preparing the grounds for an effective higher education framework in radiation oncology and cancer control in Asia and the Pacific.

10. The Regional Special Event consists of two mutually interrelated parts: first two days of the event will be spent to gain regional cohesion regarding the magnitude of cancer in Asia, and to outline the main directions of a coherent regional plan of action for human resources development in the field of radiation oncology and cancer control. The second part (next three-days) will be more technical in nature and will concentrate on the developments of core topics and training materials for building a regional high education capability in the field of radiation oncology in Asia and the Pacific.

11. This meeting will provide policy makers, cancer control professionals, radiation oncologist, and the IAEA an opportunity to understand the urgent need to come up with comprehensive cancer control strategies for enhancing the effectiveness of cancer treatment by radiotherapy as well as to encourage the planning for and the investment in Regional Cancer Training Institute in order to ensure supply of adequately trained cancer professionals in the Asia and the Pacific region.

12. Let me close by reflecting on why we are here. We are here because we are confronted by a deadly disease that has touched families or close friends of most of us present here today. We are here because we know that this deadly disease can be controlled or cured. We are here because we know that we must act now. We are here because we know that the only way forward in combating this deadly disease is working together – working together to generate resources and to develop and implement coordinated strategies and plans. We are here today because we know it can be done if we all play our part...

13. Once again, I thank the Government of Thailand for hosting this important event, and all of you for coming to share your experiences and discussing capacity development in the Asia and the Pacific region.

14. I thank you for your attention.