Aboul Gheit's address at the 16th Arab Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy

15 December 2024

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to extend my profound appreciation to the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, under the wise leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II bin Al Hussein, for graciously hosting this significant event. I also convey my gratitude to all those who have contributed to the meticulous preparation and organisation of this conference, ensuring its success and presenting it in such an exemplary manner. Furthermore, I thank each of you for your presence and active participation in the proceedings of the 16th Arab Conference on the Peaceful Uses of Atomic Energy.

The convening of this conference is especially timely, as it takes place amidst a series of rapid developments and profound challenges that our contemporary world—particularly the Arab region—is grappling with. These challenges, spanning political and security dimensions, inevitably extend their repercussions to all facets of life, encompassing economic, social, and cultural spheres.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In a world marked by volatility and uncertainty, the Arab region aspires to establish security and stability as a foundation for joining the global trajectory of progress and achieving sustainable development across all its dimensions—economic, social, and environmental. Within this context, nuclear energy, through its peaceful applications, emerges as a cornerstone for advancing sustainable development in Arab countries.

The potential of nuclear technology to address some of the most pressing contemporary challenges is undeniable. For instance, it plays a pivotal role in mitigating the impacts of climate change, strengthening economic resilience, and bolstering the capacity of economies to withstand crises and abrupt fluctuations. This is accomplished through the integration of nuclear technology in various vital sectors. These include the generation and production of electricity, desalination of water resources, support for agricultural innovation, and fostering technological development. Additionally, peaceful applications of nuclear energy extend to the field of medicine, offering transformative contributions to healthcare and medical advancements.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Figures, data, and scientific reports, particularly in recent years, underscore this undeniable trend. For instance, estimates reveal that the Middle East and North Africa region will need to expand its electricity capacity by 70 percent by 2050 to accommodate the rapidly increasing demand. In this context, nuclear energy emerges as a transformative and sustainable solution to meet such pressing needs. A single nuclear power plant, for example, has the capacity to supply energy to countless households, offering an economically viable and environmentally friendly alternative.

This perspective highlights the pivotal importance of today's conference and the exemplary role played by the Arab Atomic Energy Agency in harmonising the efforts of Arab countries, coordinating their initiatives in the peaceful applications of atomic energy, and fostering the development of regional cooperation. Moreover, the Agency plays a crucial role in facilitating the exchange of expertise and drawing from groundbreaking international experiences in this domain.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Despite these promising opportunities, Arab nations continue to face substantial challenges in leveraging nuclear energy effectively. Chief among these is the necessity to strengthen scientific and technological infrastructure to maximise benefits, alongside the imperative to train and develop human resources capable of managing and operating nuclear facilities with the utmost efficiency, in adherence to the highest standards of nuclear safety and security.

In this regard, I reiterate that the peaceful use of atomic energy is an inalienable right of all States Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, as enshrined in Article IV of the treaty. We categorically reject any attempts to curtail this right or impose unwarranted restrictions or conditions under any guise or justification.

In conclusion, I have full confidence that the outcomes of this conference will be of immense significance. I trust that it will lay down actionable mechanisms to ensure the implementation of its recommendations, thereby paving the way for the progress and development we all aspire to for our Arab nation.

Thank you.