

*Delegation from
Ecuador*

*Represented by
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International Atomic Energy Agency

Over the course of the last half century, the world has undergone what is, by any historical standard, a technological revolution. This revolution has brought about rates of change and transformation in average quality of living so drastic that they are historically groundbreaking. Globally, over the last decades, the percentage of people living below the poverty line has plummeted from 35% downwards to 10.7% in 2013, and the world is in a period of relative economic prosperity¹; however, this change is bittersweet. In much of the world - and particularly, in the Republic of Ecuador - quality of living is still very poor for many, even despite these recent improvements; and just as significantly, the world has seen an almost unprecedented rapid rise in global temperatures and in the depletion of our natural resources. It is for these reasons that, in the view of the Ecuadorian delegation, fundamental changes to how we meet our societal energy demands have become all too necessary, and perhaps one of the most promising and innovative new solutions to this problem is that of nuclear energy.

As of 2016, the Ecuadorian government has been unable to provide the financial support nor the technological infrastructure necessary to comfortably sustain a nuclear power plant within our borders; in other words, zero percent of Ecuador's energy supply can be sourced to nuclear methods of provision.² This, however, does not signify by any means that Ecuador is unaffected by the decisions made by the IAEA nor by the lingering threat of nuclear terrorism and attacks on nuclear energy facilities: these issues are internationally relevant. It is the view of this delegation that addressing the threat of nuclear terrorism is absolutely imperative: in order for governments to proceed with the development and implementation of any hypothetical nuclear plants or facilities within their borders, we must first assure that all nuclear reactors, given their potentially hazardous and dangerous nature, are absolutely safe and secure. Easing

¹ *Poverty Overview*. Washington, DC: The World Bank. Last updated October 02, 2016. Accessed November 04, 2016. <<http://www.worldbank.org/en/topic/poverty/overview>>

² *The World Factbook*. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency. Continually updated. Accessed November 05, 2016. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ec.html>>

the minds of a global population rattled by the disasters at Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, and Fukushima will be a long and arduous process; however, it is the belief of the Ecuadorian delegation that this committee's first steps must include encouraging levying tougher sanctions on governments that target nuclear facilities for attacks, reject principles of non-proliferation, and/or reject principles of nuclear transparency. In addition, this body should consider creating a more fair and accessible regulatory framework that will differentiate and permit developing nations to obtain access to nuclear energy technology whilst also explicitly avoiding the disclosure of nuclear secrets that would obstruct goals of non-proliferation. All of this must be done with a degree of sensitivity and a sense of importance given towards respecting involved nations right to a sense of national sovereignty and independence.

Though Ecuador finds assuring the security of nuclear facilities and power plants from international and terrorist threats to be imperative, Ecuador still is absolutely amicable to a prospective international transition towards nuclear energy for countries with the correct infrastructure. Ecuador itself, in fact, signed a cooperation agreement with Russia in 2009 that sought to begin the development of a nuclear energy program.³ Additionally, Ecuador is also a member of a United States-led technical cooperation project, its goal being to both share and improve upon extraction/production techniques of uranium in an environmentally friendly fashion.⁴ Realistically, it must also be recognized that any transition to nuclear energy sources will be extremely gradual due to Ecuador's limited pre-existing energy infrastructure - 500,000 people in Ecuador live completely off the grid and one in four live below the international poverty line⁵, meaning that it is very difficult for Ecuador to accept any commitments to a rapid transition from fossil fuels to Nuclear energy due to necessity of pre-existing infrastructure. Developed nations should be encouraged to transition to nuclear energy; however, it must not be

³ Valencia, Alexandra, and Eduardo Garcia. *Russia to Help Ecuador Develop Nuclear Energy*. Reuters. August 21, 2009. Accessed November 05, 2016. <<http://in.reuters.com/article/energy-ecuador-nuclear-idINN2053291620090820>>

⁴ *Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation: U.S. Support for NPT Article IV, United States and Ecuador*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Office of Multilateral Nuclear and Security Affairs, Department of State. Accessed November 05, 2016. <<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/237083.pdf>>

⁵ *The World Factbook*. Washington, DC: Central Intelligence Agency.

forgotten that still developing nations such as Ecuador rely heavily on fossil fuels to sustain their growing economies, and cannot as easily transition relative to our more developed counterparts.

Lastly, Ecuador is unabashed in expressing that it views the third topic outlined, measures to implement and enforce the nuclear program in Iran, as being of less priority relative to the aforementioned topics. In the opinion of the Ecuadorian delegation, any remaining issues that exist with Iran's nuclear programs not resolved by the JCPOA can be tangentially covered in a resolution on nuclear non-proliferation/security and/or a resolution on regulatory standards for countries embracing nuclear power as an energy alternative. Though Ecuador is aware of Iran's negative perception within neighbouring countries and internationally, and with concerns of non-compliance with non-proliferation principles by the Iranian government, good faith should be assumed unless it can be reliably indicated otherwise. Ecuador maintains a strong and close relationship with Iran throughout the recent years, and has also strongly voiced support of Iran's current nuclear programme, as well as disapproval of many of the sanctions levied against Iran.⁶ As such, Ecuador fundamentally opposes a discussion on the nuclear programme, rather favouring a discussion on the immediate threat of nuclear terrorists and/or the prospects of a transition to Nuclear energy.

(Position Paper by Dalton Liggett, John Abbott College)

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⁶ Farrar-Wellman, Ariel. *Ecuador-Iran Foreign Relations*. IranTracker.org. February 27, 2010. Accessed November 05, 2016. <http://www.irantracker.org/foreign-relations/ecuador-iran-foreign-relations#_ftn1>

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