Council: International Atomic Energy Agency

Representing: Colombia

Delegate Name: Spencer Keller

From: Saint John’s Kilmarnock

Topic: (1) Addressing the Threat of Nuclear Terrorism

Since the Second World War, the threat that nuclear weapons have imposed upon the security and stability of sovereign nations has sparked much controversy; in particular, non-state organizations that possess control over such weapons. With the continuously increasing power and wealth of terrorist organizations such as ISIS and Al-Qaeda, along with the lack of progress that has been made towards achieving nuclear disarmament in certain countries such as Pakistan and India, the likelihood of a nuclear disaster continues to grow. Because of the escalating possibility of a nuclear attack, countering acts of terrorism has become an important topic for the IAEA.

The delegation of Colombia strongly believes that the IAEA should take particular consideration in the disarmament of all nations that possess a nuclear arsenal. As a member of the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty, Colombia does not possess any nuclear weapons, nor have the legal capability to test or develop any further weapons, under power of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. However, it should be noted that the failure of some countries to become active members of these treaties has caused some concern for many nations, including Colombia. The security of all nations is threatened as long as countries such as India continue to develop nuclear weapons and refuse to disclose the magnitude of their arsenal. Following the discovery of a black market used for the trade of components used in the development of nuclear assets developed by A.Q. Khan in 2004, as well as the aforementioned threat of terrorist groups, Colombia believes that more attention should have been diverted towards further disarmament of countries like India in order to prevent a similar incident. While Colombia and many other nations have become member of the treaties stated previously, we strongly believe that other nations should also do such in order to eliminate the threat of nuclear disaster, as opposed to propagating it.

As mentioned, Colombia believes that the disarmament of all countries possessing nuclear weapons, as well as the prevention of further developing such arsenals should be made a priority. We suggest that a new sub-committee of the IAEA be introduced in order to monitor nuclear activity within a country, as opposed to the annual checks that are currently being performed by the IAEA. Using the extensive array of infrasonic, hydro acoustic, and seismic detectors across the globe, this new sub-committee will be able to detect atmospheric, subterranean, and underwater nuclear detonations with ease. From this point, an appropriate course of action may be taken to address the implications of such an event. In severe cases (the detection of several nuclear detonations within a relatively minute period of time), such issues may be taken to the Security Council in order to develop a solution. Seeing as India and Pakistan have a history of competing with regards to the expansion of their nuclear arsenals, the delegation of Colombia might also suggest that the IAEA propose a set of comprehensive mutual agreements pertaining to certain countries that limit their nuclear capabilities. An example includes the United States and the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Following a massive development in both countries’ nuclear arsenals (thus guaranteeing mutually ensured destruction, had one nation taken action), both states signed the NPT and their nuclear arsenals have been diminishing ever since. If a similar agreement could be reached between nations such as India and Pakistan (who are also competing), it is also likely that both would then make significant strides towards disarmament. Colombia would like to see a relatively significant reduction (over 25%) in the arsenals of nations who have not signed onto NPT in the coming 10 years. At the very least, Colombia hopes that nations who are currently discreet about the size of their nuclear arsenals begin to disclose this information in the near future.

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Topic: (2) Nuclear Energy as an Alternate Source of Energy

Since the end of the Second World War, nuclear fission has been used for more than malicious purposes. The implementation of nuclear energy within nations across the globe has been a constantly evolving process that shows much promise for future sources of cleaner energy. While the initial cost of implementation of a nuclear reactor is high, it is a worthwhile investment when taking into account environmental, safety, and long term-economic considerations.

Colombia has had little involvement in the use of nuclear power as an alternate source of energy. Colombia has a single TRIGA reactor provided by the U.S. under the Atoms for Peace program dedicated solely to research purposes. However, in cooperation with the IAEA, this reactor has undergone gradual improvements with regards to its power output, instrumentation, and control systems. Colombia is currently working to further upgrade the reactor (to produce an output of 100kW), as well as manufacture a further (19.7%) enriched fuel. The United Nations have taken notable strides towards the implementation of nuclear power as an alternate form of producing energy in developing countries. The IAEA has been responsible for the majority of this progress. The committee continues to encourage the safe and practical implementation of atomic energy within nations (especially developing nations), and providing the necessary technology to support the use of nuclear energy in a peaceful manner. In the face of three major incidents involving nuclear power production plants (Chernobyl, Three-Mile Island, Fukushima), the IAEA has affirmed that ensuring the safe operation of nuclear plants is of top priority. Colombia must concur with this statement, also under the belief that before the mass implementation of nuclear power plants in multiple countries, the safety of these facilities must meet the standards set by the IAEA.

Once again, because the delegation of Colombia believes that the safe operation of nuclear power plants should be prioritized, the issue of deposition of nuclear waste should thus also be made a priority. While the waste output of reactors tends to be minimal compared to their input, our current methods of storing toxic products of nuclear power production are inefficient and possess potential to improve. Colombia proposes that neighbouring nations collaborate in order to establish a region in which several states may deposit their nuclear waste that is situated far from populated regions in a safe manner. This method of waste deposition is comparable to Finland’s current way of ridding itself of nuclear waste. As with the regular inspections of nuclear reactors, the IAEA will monitor this region, ensuring the continued safe practice of ridding oneself of nuclear waste. It is also recommended that a specialized sub-committee of the IAEA be developed in order to perform more comprehensive inspections of the established remote regions that nuclear waste is being deposited, as well as the level of safety of the method of transport to this region. Colombia also recommends that a set of agreements be reached between developed and developing nations in which ventures to improve the infrastructure of developing nations is accelerated. This may include but is certainly not limited to: Redirecting funds towards the development of more expansive power grids, sending manual labour forces into a given country in order to aid in maintenance and/or expansion of infrastructure, or aiding in the development of research teams that may work to produce more efficient power grids independent of aid from developed nations. At the very least, Colombia hopes that nations may come to agreement in order to make the implementation of further means of producing energy via nuclear plants more secure and common. This may be done through establishing a official and safe way to rid oneself of nuclear waste without the need for a communal deposition area, for example.