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### SPEECHES

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IAEA Board of Governors Meeting

June 2-6, 2008

Agenda Item 11 – Any Other Business

Syria

U.S. Statement

Mr. Chairman,

On April 24, the United States provided information to the Secretariat regarding an undeclared nuclear reactor Syria was constructing in its eastern desert near a place we call Al-Kibar. We are confident this facility was in fact a nuclear reactor of the same type North Korea built indigenously at its Yongbyon nuclear facility – a graphite-moderated, gas-cooled reactor. This type of reactor is suitable for production of plutonium, which was apparently the reactor's intended purpose since it was not configured for power production, was isolated from any civilian population, and was ill-suited for research.

As the DG reminded us on Monday, Syria failed to declare to the IAEA that it was constructing a nuclear reactor, even though construction of the facility began six years ago. Instead, Syria took measures to conceal its activities, such as altering the exterior of the reactor building to disguise its similarity to the Yongbyon facility. Syria is legally obligated under its safeguards agreement to notify the IAEA of new nuclear facilities at the time a decision is taken to build them. Therefore by not declaring the site to the IAEA, Syria not only violated its safeguards agreement but also undermined the very purpose of IAEA safeguards – to provide the international community with the necessary assurance that the reactor was part of a peaceful program.

After the reactor was destroyed in September of last year, Syria went to great lengths to clean up the site and destroy evidence of what existed at Al-Kibar. Despite a request by the Director General, Syria did not allow inspectors to visit

the site last fall. We now know, and have provided evidence to members of the Board, that on October 10, 2007, Syria conducted a controlled demolition of the reactor debris and promptly began removing equipment and debris from the site. Much of the work took place at night or under the cover of tarpaulins. By December, Syria had constructed a large building where the reactor once stood.

Syria's obfuscations and concealment efforts raise many troubling questions. If it were intended for a civil nuclear energy program, why not declare the reactor to the IAEA and place it under IAEA Safeguards as it was obligated to do? And, why go to such lengths to cover up its clandestine activities? What does Syria have to hide?

Mr. Chairman,

The Director General has informed us that the Secretariat has undertaken an investigation to determine the true nature of the facility. The United States strongly supports this investigation and calls on Syria to cooperate with the IAEA's investigation and to provide assurances there are no other undeclared nuclear activities. We expect that Syria will cooperate proactively during the Agency's visit later this month, providing access to individuals, documents and locations relevant to the IAEA inspection.

The existence of undisclosed nuclear facilities in Syria further underlines the limitations of the Agency in a country with a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement but without the Additional Protocol. We have seen this before and in response have developed the Additional Protocol in order to give the inspectors the tools they need to provide us, the Member States, with the assurances we require that a country's declaration is not only correct, but is also complete, and its nuclear program is therefore exclusively for peaceful purposes. We call on Syria, and all states that have not yet done so, to sign and implement the Additional Protocol.

The United States asks that all Board members join us in seeking clarification of these suspect activities. We understand that the Secretariat will keep the Board apprised of its investigation and look forward to a report of its findings prior to the September Board.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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