

26th Meeting of RCA National Representatives
12 April, 2004, Islamabad, Pakistan.
INAUGURAL ADDRESS BY Mr. KHUSHID MAHMOOD KASURI,
THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF PAKISTAN

*Dr. Masud Ahmad, Member PAEC
Mr. Peter M. Salema, Director, Department of Technical Cooperation, IAEA,
Dr. Prinath Dias, RCA Coordinator,
Honorable delegates from the RCA Member States and distinguished guests,*

It is indeed a great pleasure for me to inaugurate the 26th RCA National Representatives Meeting of the Regional Cooperative Agreement (RCA). I would like to express my warm welcome to all the delegates and distinguished guests. I hope your discussions will be fruitful for the establishment of a more effective regional cooperation in the peaceful application of nuclear science and technology.

Pakistan has always shown keen interest in the activities of the IAEA and believes in regional cooperation for the utilization of atomic energy for peaceful applications. It was indeed an encouraging and timely step that Seventeen Member States of Asia and Pacific region entered into Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training related to Nuclear Science and Technology for the region. The activities of the RCA in this region played an important role for initiating the idea of sharing of each other know-how in the areas of importance to their development. Its achievements are being widely regarded as an example of successful cooperative effort in the application of nuclear techniques at regional level. RCA activities are mostly concentrated in centres of excellence where Member States can benefit from the experience of that centre. We too in Pakistan are now ready to play our role. I am happy to say that in the field of application of nuclear techniques in the field of isotope hydrology, our Pakistan institute of Nuclear Science & Technology (PINSTECH), Islamabad, a Regional Research Unit (RRU), which you will visit tomorrow, has accumulated considerable experience and expertise. We will be glad to share the experience of this centre with other Member States. We have also strong interest in other fields like Non-Destructive Testing and Industrial Radiography in which too we have acquired experience and expertise and will be glad to host training courses for the benefit of RCA Member States under the sponsorship of the Agency. We believe that such interaction would further strengthen the spirit of TCDC.

Pakistan is an active member of the family of RCA. Having a long history of its association with the Agreement for around 30 years, Pakistan has played an active role in the various development phases of the Agreement. We are confident that the Member States, with their established record of excellent performance and cooperation, will be able to come up with a better and strong RCA. Pakistan will be pleased to go along with its other partners in the RCA to achieve this objective.

It is heartening to realize that Pakistan has gained substantially from the activities of the RCA in the peaceful applications of nuclear technology in the areas of agriculture, health, industry, quality assurance, research reactor utilization, etc. The economic benefits from the RCA programmes in Pakistan are already reaching the end users. We are gearing ourselves for a greater interaction between the PAEC and the end users in the near future. In this regard, we would welcome the new strategies to be adopted by the RCA.

Pakistan is looking forward to an increasingly greater role of TCDC in the activities of the RCA. Basically, all the four agreements under the umbrella of the IAEA, i.e., ARCAL, AFRA, ARASIA & RCA, among whom the RCA so distinctly stands out as a model agreement, are seen by the world community as effective vehicles for the promotion of the TCDC. We feel that the application of the TCDC concept in the Member States with a wide spectrum of national backgrounds would prove to be invaluable experience from which IAEA and others can draw upon. Pakistan would be happy to participate in this experience.

I would also like to express my deep appreciation for the contribution, made by the IAEA and the National Coordinators of the RCA Member States for steering ahead the programme of the RCA with dedication and diligence. My particular tributes are due to the Department of Technical Cooperation, IAEA for providing a very able management team for the programmes of the Agreement.

With these words, I have great pleasure in inaugurating the 26th RCA Representatives Meeting and wish you all success in your deliberations and hope that you will carry pleasant memories of your visit to Islamabad.

I thank you.

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