

The Uranium Institute

Twenty-Second Annual Symposium
3–5 September 1997: London



Chairman's Opening Address

Tokio Kanoh

First of all, I would like to extend my heartfelt welcome to all the participants of the 22nd Symposium. During these two days, we will have an opportunity to listen to speakers from all over the world to discuss the peaceful use of nuclear energy as well as the current status and future of the nuclear fuel cycle from a variety of viewpoints. I would like to express my deep gratitude to the speakers for generously accepting our invitation.

At the Symposium today, we have ___ participants. It is a pleasure for me to inform you that the Symposium is now one of the largest conferences in the nuclear industry. I would also like to thank each participant for their cooperation and effort in making the Symposium a successful event.

Please allow me to take this opportunity to briefly comment on nuclear energy and the environmental issue. The year 1997 is known as the the "Year of the Environment", and marks the fifth year since the Rio Earth Summit of 1992. The issue of the global environment is at the focus of attention worldwide. In June, the United Nations General Assembly Special Session on the Environment and Development was held in New York, to follow up on the Earth Summit. In addition, the Third Conference of Parties (COP3) for the Framework Convention on Climate Change, which will establish measures against global warming after 2000, will be held in Kyoto in December, with approximately 5000 participants from 150 countries.

The Keidanren, the Federation of Economic Organisations of Japan, will take that opportunity to hold the "International Conference on Voluntary Business Initiatives for Mitigating Climate Change" in Kyoto in collaboration with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD)

and the International Chamber of Commerce (ICC). This forum will announce, as a joint declaration, the efforts of industries around the world to prevent global warming, as well as specific measures centered on self-help.

Meanwhile, the Uranium Institute has also identified environmental activities as the most important issue of 1997. Taking part in the COP 3 as an NGO, the Institute plans to announce the nuclear industry's joint statement in collaboration with the Japan Atomic Industrial Forum (JAIF), the Nuclear Energy Institute (NEI) and Foratom, expressly endorsing "the promotion of nuclear power generation with high CO₂ reduction effects". We plan to appeal to those involved in environmental issues "the effect of nuclear options that contributes to the mitigation of global warming," as input to the COP3 discussion.

In the first session of this Symposium, we have invited experts to provide us with their views on the environment and nuclear energy. Mr Jean-Marie Bourdairé of the International Energy Agency will give us 'Nuclear power and sustainable development' as his presentation. Mr Björn Stigson of WBCSD will make a presentation under the title of 'Business Progress Towards Sustainable Development.'

For us involved in nuclear energy and as members of various industrial and economic organisations, it is time to deepen our understanding of the ties between the environment and nuclear energy and to take action in collaboration. I am strongly hoping that our participants will take many opportunities to speak out actively on the role of nuclear energy in regards to environmental issues.



Tokio Kanoh, the Chairman of the Uranium Institute (right), presents the Gold Medal to Hans Blix, the Director General of the IAEA.

To close my words of greeting, I would like to emphasize that making this Symposium a success depends on the active involvement of each participant. I am looking forward to the invigorating exchange of opinions among all participants.

Gold Medal Presentation

In 1985 the Council of the Uranium Institute decided to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the founding of the Institute by creating an award, in the form of a gold medal, to be made "for out-standing contributions which have facilitated the deployment of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes". A tradition was established subsequently of making such an award every second year. I am glad to say that we are going to add to that tradition today.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that the Council of Management of the Institute has chosen Dr Hans Marten Blix, the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, as the recipient of the Uranium Institute's 1997 Gold Medal.

The earlier holders of the Institute's Gold Medal have had distinguished careers in the de-

velopment of their respective countries' nuclear power programmes. Dr Blix's contribution to the deployment of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes has been in an altogether different domain, that of international cooperation.

The IAEA, of which he has been the outstanding head for the past 16 years, was founded 40 years ago as the international instrument by which the benefits of the civil deployment of nuclear energy could be made available to all countries while restricting their access to nuclear weapons. In this, thanks in great measure to Dr Blix's wise leadership, and that of his predecessors as Director General, it has been remarkably successful. In 1957 there was only one country with a civil nuclear power station on a commercial scale. Now there are more than 30.

In honouring Hans Blix, we are also honouring the achievements of the IAEA and of its entire staff. But great international institutions reflect the qualities of their leaders, and the development of the IAEA into the most outstanding of all the specialised agencies in the United Nations family is without doubt the achievement of Hans

Blix. Under his leadership, it has been not merely an indispensable tool of arms control: it has also made a fundamental contribution to the transformation of the nuclear business into a competitive purveyor of safe, environmentally sound energy for the benefit of all mankind.

Hans Blix began his professional life in a quite different sphere. After a period as an academic lawyer, he moved into the Swedish foreign ministry and rose rapidly to be head of its legal department, and its principal adviser on international law. In 1976, he became under-secretary in charge of international development cooperation. In October 1978 he was appointed Foreign Minister in the non-socialist coalition government of that time. In both ministerial appointments he acquitted himself well and attracted international attention. When the election of a new director general for the Agency became deadlocked in the summer of 1981, Hans Blix was the candidate whom all could support. It might therefore seem that it was a stroke of luck that Dr Blix became the Director General of the IAEA. It was more. It was stroke of genius.

He took over an organisation that was drifting. It had more than its share of political troubles, from the cold war rivalries of the superpowers to the Arab-Israeli dispute. The nuclear arms race was in full flood. In the wake of the second oil shock the price of uranium was at an all time high. The Three Mile Island accident had already dented the early confidence of the nuclear power pioneers, and the developing countries were wondering where the promised benefits were.

It is a measure of Blix's achievements that on all fronts the IAEA is at present riding high, despite

the vicissitudes of the past 16 years. Time is too short to list all his achievements in detail. Nuclear disarmament has supplanted the arms race. There has been great progress on nuclear safety (especially in the former Soviet Union), on the integration of the Russians and their former allies into the world nuclear community, on cross border liability, on the extension of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the expansion of its membership until it is almost universal, on the strengthening of the international safeguards system, and on the provision of technical assistance in many nuclear technologies to developing countries. The IAEA has continued its steady scientific programme of meetings of experts in all aspects of nuclear energy, of training and of publication of academic and research work at the cutting edge of nuclear science.

All of this has taken place while Hans Blix has been Director General of the IAEA. The civil nuclear fuel cycle industries represented at this Symposium are deeply in his debt. Without his energy, goodwill, and above all his conscientious dedication to the task of the promotion of nuclear energy for the civil benefit of mankind, we would all be the poorer, whether we belong to the industry or to the general public.

Need I say more? In the Council's opinion, Dr Blix, you are an outstanding and most worthy recipient of the Institute's Medal. It gives me great pleasure to present it to you now, at this first session of the Uranium Institute's 22nd Annual Symposium.

It is also a great honor for the Uranium Institute to have Dr Blix deliver the opening speech for us today, titled "Energy and global sustainable development".