Mr. President,

I join other speakers in extending our gratitude to dear friend Dr. M. El Baradei for presenting the Annual Report of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). The dynamic leadership provided by Dr. Baradei is emblematic of the commendable work performed by the Agency in a very difficult and challenging international environment of the present times. Let me assure Dr. Baradei and his team our full support.

2. The IAEA is a unique international forum whose statutory obligations are meant for development through the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. Its technical expertise is unmatched; its goals and objectives are equitable; its decisions enjoy respect among the Member States. The Agency’s inspection and verification on Iraq during 2002, and early this year, bear the testimony of its impartiality in performing its task with professionalism. Therefore, there is a need to secure the Agency’s impartial role in the service of its Member States.

Mr. President,

3. Fast depleting fossil resources have revived the demand for nuclear energy. Scientifically, it is now widely accepted that the nuclear energy provides environment-friendly and sustainable source of energy needed for development, especially in the developing countries.

4. We are encouraged to see that Agency’s report has highlighted the growing demand for the nuclear energy during 2002. Out of 33 reactors currently under construction worldwide, 20 are located in Asia. Seventeen of the 26 reactors to be connected to the grids are in the Far East and South Asia. The pace of the construction of these reactors could be further increased if states are not subjected to undue restrictions. With innovative technologies, “safe” nuclear power plants are a reality and could be constructed in energy-deficient developing countries. In this regard, the IAEA’s role in the transfer of safe technology to developing countries has assumed added significance. We hope that the Agency would formulate a comprehensive policy towards this end.

5. The Agency’s development role has been duly acknowledged in the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD), held in Johannesburg last year, for promoting specific action for sustained energy development through peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Agency has also played a commendable role in health and agriculture sectors as well as efficient management of water resources. A sustained effort would be required to allocate more resources to the IAEA to carry out further research work in health and agriculture sectors. Already nuclear medicine is playing a crucial role in the treatment of cancer and tuberculosis. Similarly, protection of crops and enhancing agricultural productivity through innovative nuclear technologies could immensely reduce hunger and poverty in the world.

Mr. President,

6. The safety and verification aspects of the IAEA mandate remain important pillars of the Agency’s mandate. The Agency has initiated action with regard to the safety of nuclear materials. There is need to focus attention on securing “orphan” sources of such materials which pose an immediate danger of falling into the wrong hands. The Agency’s report highlights this aspect and we fully agree with the remedial measures suggested in this regard.
7. As regard strengthening of the Agency’s safeguards system, Pakistan believes that the maintenance of a proper balance between the promotional aspects and safety or security related concerns in all of the Agency’s functions is essential. The Agency’s safeguards should not be used to serve partisan political objectives. Its verification regime could remain credible only if it is applied on a non-discriminatory basis as stipulated in the Agency’s Statutes. Cooperation and greater understanding is required among all the Member States of the Agency to advance the Agency’s mandate on the basis of impartiality, equity and professionalism.

Mr. President,

8. The Government of Pakistan attaches highest importance to the Technical Cooperation Programme of the Agency as it offers unique opportunities to the developing countries for prosperity and economic growth with the availability of easy and affordable sources of energy. In view of Pakistan’s limited fossil fuel resources, nuclear power generation has become an indispensable element of our national energy strategy. We are also extremely sensitive to the risk of industrial pollution expected as a result of our economic growth. This further obligates us to promote nuclear power generation in the coming years. Pakistan’s excellent operational and the safety record of its two nuclear power plants, KANUPP and CHASNUPP, and the existence of a reliable infrastructure relevant to the nuclear power plants have encouraged us to acquire another nuclear power station similar to CHASNUPP.

9. Pakistan’s future nuclear power generation activities will not be limited merely to the installation of more power plants, but extend to the utilization of some of these facilities for powering the desalination plants. We are actively working, in collaboration with the IAEA, to establish our first demonstration desalination unit at KANUPP. Pakistan is also applying nuclear sciences for the development of agriculture, health and reclamation of wasteland. We appreciate the growing cooperation between Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) and the IAEA in this field. Pakistan is also interested in playing a serious role in the international effort to promoting International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycle (INPRO) so that Pakistan could benefit from the safe, cost effective and proliferation resistant nuclear power plants in future.

Mr. President,

10. We are highly sensitive to the safety and security of our nuclear installations, particularly when Pakistan is extending its nuclear power generation for the economic development. Pakistan has successfully established a strong safety culture in its nuclear activities. We are diligently adhering to the principles of Nuclear Safety Convention, which Pakistan had signed at the time of its inception. We have further strengthened security measures around our nuclear installations to avoid any possibility of nuclear terrorism or of illicit trafficking of nuclear material. Our active participation in the Agency’s initiative to strengthen the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) will continue. We are desirous of an early conclusion of the deliberations on this Convention with the hope that this important Convention will enable us to enhance our capabilities to protect our nuclear installations and the material in a more effective manner.

Mr. President,

11. We all have great expectations with the IAEA in the promotion of socio-economic development of its Member States. The Agency’s technical cooperation requires a reassessment of its current framework whereby it can render assistance to the Member States on non-discriminatory and equitable basis. The following measures could help in enhancing its cooperative role:-
One: The need to preserve the technical nature of the Agency and to ensure its functioning according to its statute without any politicization of its agenda.

Two: The imperative to maintain balance between the promotional aspects and verification, safety and security related functions of the Agency.

Three: The significance of the technical cooperation activities of the Agency and the role of these activities in assisting with development and practical application of atomic energy for peaceful uses and in technology transfer to developing countries.

Four: Provision of more assured resources for technical cooperation activities, technology transfer and training facilities for the developing countries.

Five: Greater involvement of the developing countries in the design and implementation of Technical Cooperation projects and increased outsourcing to developing Member States for Technical Cooperation Programme.

12. Finally, Mr. President, we are happy that this year’s draft resolution on the IAEA Report has taken into account the concerns of all the Member States. The new text excludes the controversial elements which have in the past impeded the adoption of a consensus resolution on the subject. We have joined this consensus and would be happy to co-sponsor the draft resolution.

I thank you, Mr. President.