

74th Session of the UN General Assembly
Fourth Committee
Effects of Atomic Radiation (Agenda Item 48)

INDIA STATEMENT
By
Mr. Deepak Misra, Minister

24 October 2019

Mr Chairman,

At the outset, India would like to place on record its appreciation for the efforts put in by the UN Scientific Committee on Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) for its scientific evaluation of sources of ionizing radiation and associated exposures, effects and risks to human health and to the environment. The evaluation and reports of the Committee have been of immense benefit to the global scientific community, regulators and to the general public at large. India assures this Committee that it would continue to support various programmes of UNSCEAR and share the knowledge gained on effects and risks of ionizing radiation from her own experience, as well as deliberations on the various issues placed before the committee by Member States.

2. India welcomes the appointment of a Scientific Secretary, which will help in coordinating the activities of the Scientific Committee and enhance its effectiveness. Further, India assures extending technical expertise for the work of the Scientific Committee.

Mr. Chairman,

3. India appreciates the efforts taken by the Scientific Committee on evaluation of health effects and risk due to radiation exposure and its evaluation of incidence of lung cancer from exposure to Radon. This study will help to revisit the existing guidelines to protect the Uranium mine workers from harmful effects of radiation.

4. We would, however, like to mention that Indian scientists have been carrying out exhaustive studies over four decades in densely populated areas of Kerala, which have high-level natural background radiation. These include the site of monazite-bearing sands, as well as workers in beach sand mineral industry. Our studies suggest that high-level natural background radiation has not increased the incidence of cancer morbidity and mortality among the inhabitants.

5. India would like to state that there is a growing body of researchers who, based on experimental and epidemiological evidence, do not support the Linear No Threshold (LNT) model of estimating health effects at low doses. In this regard, India re-emphasizes its earlier stand of integrated study of radiobiology and epidemiology at international level in order to collect more systematic information about health effects of low dose radiation and revisiting LNT hypothesis and its application.

6. As a part of scientific committee's outreach programme, India has translated information leaflets, published by UNEP/UNSCEAR (Radiation Effects and Sources) in Hindi and will continue to bring out information leaflets in various regional languages for the benefit of a wider population base.

7. India encourages the enrolment of new members and their active participation in the Scientific Committee, as application of radiation touches every aspect of human life across the globe.

Mr. Chairman,

8. India is of the opinion that nuclear technology provides humanity with enormous benefits, not only as a clean and green energy source but also leads to a better quality of life. However, it

tends to get negative publicity arising out of social concerns and fears about possible adverse health effects due to radiation exposure. In this context, India commends UNSCEAR for its efforts to enhance the scientific understanding on aspects related to nuclear radiation which would go a long way in dispelling such notions.

Thank You.