



NRC NEWS

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Remarks Before The 29th Nuclear Safety Research Conference

by

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Washington, DC**

Good morning and welcome again especially those of you who come from abroad or are not part of our outstanding group of staff from the NRC. I know from reports from the conference that many of you have many questions regarding what is going on and where are we going and we don't seem to have that many answers. We will have the answers in time and we will actually make sure that you share in what those answers are.

Whatever the questions and whatever the answers are I want to assure you that there are some things that have changed, some things that will continue to change, but some things that will never change. Something that will never change is the mission of the NRC which is shared by so many of you. That mission will not change. Will not be moved. That mission will not only continue, but improve. We will protect public health and safety. We will protect the environment and we will protect the common defense and security no matter what and that is not just a statement coming me, but I'm sure you understand a statement coming from this nation.

I'm sure those of you who come from abroad share the same goals for your governments and for your people and we're glad you're joining with us at this time of crisis to make a statement that might be needed for the survival of society. People question and I know, you know, how will America fare? Let me make a clear statement. We will not only survive. We will prosper. It might be different, but we will make it.

Whatever happens, I think these times will show that our resolve is one that comes from hard work, from freedom, from all of the processes that make the people of this country great and the

government processes that take care of the people great. Those again will not change. We will get better at many things that we do and, of course, getting better is often what research is all about and what you guys are always looking at.

It is important to understand and this is my own personal opinion that whatever we do in other areas; however, we must improve security or however we change, we must not be deterred from doing what our job is. That is fundamental because as the President of the United States and everybody is saying, that is the only way that our enemies will win and they are not going to win.

Your presence in here is important to us. It tells us that there is a continuation. There is a path and that path will not be deterred by whatever else we're doing. We might be distracted now, but our focus continues. There's no doubt many of you are wondering what are the increase in physical security and safeguards going to do to everything else and it's a good question and we don't know all the answers. However, our focus remains. We will not let go of all of those things that we have to do and we will continue to search for those things that we must do.

The NRC is committed and will continue to be committed to those things in our charter. We must license. We must regulate. Right now, we are asking everybody to think out of the box and at this time, I'm going to step a little bit out of the box because I think it's important that this message comes through. I believe that nuclear power and that radiation technologies are not a luxury or a fix of the imagination. I believe they are indispensable for our national security. They're a part of what we must have to ensure the security of this nation and, therefore, they must be defended by every means that we have including maintaining capable, viable research capacities that will make us better because the answers will come from what is making us better and what we must continue, what can make us better and how do we find it and what could make us better and how do we get there.

A few months ago, in a conference that took place at our building, the issue was advanced reactors and they asked me to start up the conference and the title of my talk was "Disciplined, Meaningful, and Scrutable." Talking about those processes that must be used when we can see there the licensing and the design of advanced reactors. Nothing has changed except that we now realize that those simple words disciplined, meaningful and scrutable apply to so many other things that we do including physical security.

And we used to talk about often in that we were embarking a new regulatory framework which I believe is vital. We call it risk-informed regulation and I say that is not the only thing that is happening. It should be risk-informed design, risk-informed operation, risk-informed maintenance.

Nothing has changed. We just added risk-informed security to it. Not security for whatever comes to mind, but security that fits the rest of what we must do. Not something that is just added on at the spur of the moment, but something that fits and fits the risk and is not independent of everything else that we do.

This first Nuclear Safety Research Conference which is hard for me to say after so many years of light-water reactor research is continuing and I hope that from it a sense of continuity, a sense of purpose goes to everybody in your offices and your countries and the realization that we stand ready to work with you.

The issue that, you know, you're going to deal with this morning and this excellent panel communicating the role of research is a tough job. The commission is now dealing with the issue how

do we communicate not only the role of research, but the capabilities to maintain and protect public health and safety and it's not a small issue because compromises will have to be made. Compromises in which, you know, information that was freely given before might have to be looked at to not give it to those that will use it against us.

On the other hand, we have this tremendous obligation of being open, of being transparent, of having people being able to see what we're doing and that is going to be a very tough job. Communications have gotten harder not easier and therefore, again, it requires the best of our intellects. I think that intellectual development of this community is going to be sound and good. Everybody needs to think out of the box so we cannot only survive but prosper. The capabilities to endure whatever is facing us are here and they need to be developed.

I again thank you for being here. I am honored to be part of this community and I wish you well.