Welcome

Jean-Pierre Revol

Good morning, Ladies and Gentlemen. I would like to welcome you to ThEC13, the international conference dedicated to the use of thorium as a source of energy.

Nuclear energy has the potential to provide humankind with abundant carbon free energy for at least a thousand years. The question we shall be addressing with ThEC13 is: “Can nuclear energy based on thorium fuel fulfill that potential?”. The more specific goal of ThEC13 is to contribute to answering that question and show that nuclear energy based on thorium fuel would be acceptable to society, in terms of safety, management of waste and weapon proliferation.

The Organizing Committee is very pleased that, with more than 200 participants from 32 countries, all continents are represented at ThEC13. This is clear testimony to the strong and growing worldwide interest in thorium.

As this conference is entirely dedicated to thorium, I thought that it would be a good idea to have some thorium in the room. There is a sample of 230 g of Monazite (Fig. 1) on display at the entrance of this auditorium. It contains 2–3 % of thorium and was extracted from the Steenkampskraal mine in South Africa. It comes to us courtesy of Trevor Blench, CEO of Steenkampskraal Thorium Limited, whom I would like to specially thank for his gift to ThEC13.

The sample is slightly radioactive. The dose rate at 50 cm is 0.2 $\mu\text{Sv/h}$, to be compared with the natural radioactivity dose rate in Geneva of around 0.1 $\mu\text{Sv/h}$.

Fig. 1 Photo of the Monazite sample that was on display in the CERN Globe of Science and Innovation on the occasion of ThEC13

As we have a rather tight schedule ahead of us for the next three and a half days, let me conclude now, and on behalf of iThEC, the international Thorium Energy Committee, and IThEO, the International Thorium Energy Organisation, wish you a very fruitful conference, here in Geneva, on the use of thorium in the energy domain.

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