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Amano wins without support from developing nations Japan's Amano wins election for IAEA chief



Japan's Yukiya Amano wins vote for IAEA chief by a narrow margin and without support from developing nations

VIENNA (Agencies)

Japanese Diplomat Yukiya Amano wins on Thursday election to become the International Atomic Energy Agency's next general-director when Egyptian Mohamed ElBaradei ends his term in November.

Amano won the required 2/3 majority of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) governing board members expressing a preference, with 23 votes and one abstention in the 35-nation meeting, defeating his South African rival.

But his triumph may be seen as hollow by many nations which wanted an IAEA leader with broad consensus backing raise questions about his authority in tackling rising threats to the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Amano defeated South Africa's Abdul Samad Minty in the last of four rounds of balloting by the U.N. atomic watchdog's executive body to prevail in his second run for the job after an inconclusive election in March.

But the fact that Amano, favored by industrialized nations, scraped through to victory by the bare minimum margin, without support of developing states, compounded a rich-poor split on the Board and may make it harder for him to lead the agency.

Yet Amano said he was "very pleased" with the win.

"This afternoon I have received the support from 23 countries which is the necessary number of votes to be selected as the next director general of the IAEA," he told journalists. "I am very pleased for this support."

"If I have the privilege of being elected as the new director general of the IAEA, I will do my utmost to enhance the welfare of the human beings and ensure sustainable development through the peaceful use of nuclear energy," Amano said before the vote Amano said.

Looming challenges in the politically sensitive post include Iran's nuclear program, blocked investigations into alleged military nuclear activities in Iran and Syria, and North Korean nuclear tests.