



**Statement
of the Republic of Cyprus to the
International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and
Strengthening Efforts (ICONS 2020)
Vienna, Austria, 10-14 February 2020
by the Head of Delegation,
Mr. Christos Malikkides
Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Labour, Welfare and
Social Insurance
of the Republic of Cyprus**

Chairperson/President,

On behalf of the Republic of Cyprus I would like to commend the late Director General Mr. Amano, and the current Director General Mr. Grossi for convening, for the third time, a Conference on Nuclear Security.

The Republic of Cyprus fully aligns itself with the statement made {by the Representative of Sweden} on behalf of the European Union and fully supports the Ministerial Declaration adopted by this Conference. I would like to assure you of the full support and cooperation of the Cypriot delegation regarding the Conference proceedings. We also express our appreciation to the Secretariat of the Agency, for their dedicated and professional work.

We are confident that this event, similarly to the 2013 and 2016 Conferences on Nuclear Security, will make important contributions to global nuclear security. We consider that strengthening nuclear and radiological security highly contributes to ensuring the protection of people and the environment and that nuclear and radiological security remain a crucial element in facilitating international cooperation in the peaceful uses of ionising radiation.

Chairperson,

Your Excellencies,

Distinguished Delegates.

We would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the Agency for its achievements and contribution to non-proliferation efforts, to strengthening the international nuclear safety and security framework, to promoting international cooperation by assisting states with capacity building and the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

We strongly support the central role of the IAEA in the global nuclear security framework as widely recognized by international initiatives which have contributed to strengthening nuclear security.

The Republic of Cyprus, as a Contracting Party to all major international Treaties and Conventions relating to nuclear safety and security, including the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Nuclear Facilities, assures of its full commitment to their implementation and to following the IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

This Conference, as an important global gathering, provides an opportunity to briefly outline in our national capacity, important priorities and targets. It also offers the opportunity to all participants, and to the world, to get further acquainted with and to discuss the latest applications and security implications of ionising radiation. We strongly support research efforts towards world peace and development and in the past few years have experienced a surge in related research in our universities, institutes and research centers, utilizing the latest technological developments, establishing our country as a center for innovation and research. We believe that ionising radiation applications should be further developed and expanded, improving our lives and our environment and this cannot be done without due care for security implications.

The Republic of Cyprus has benefited from various IAEA activities in terms of knowledge transfer and acquisition of expertise. Over the years, we have co-organized a number of IAEA meetings, workshops and training courses in our country, including several during the past year, and vow to support more IAEA safety and security events in the future.

In addition to the 2017 Integrated Regulatory Review Service peer review mission, Cyprus will also undergo an ARTEMIS peer review mission during this year.

We will continue our efforts to maintain and strengthen radiation, transport and waste safety and security, as well as emergency preparedness and response. In this context, Cyprus has 2 national projects for the 2020 to 2023 programme cycles. We have also completed, during the past year, the IAEA Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plan for Cyprus. Through this process Cyprus reviewed its nuclear security regime and identified areas where strengthening is needed. This was performed together with the IAEA and all parties involved in nuclear and radiological security in Cyprus.

Cyprus, in its efforts to improve nuclear and radiological security both in the Country and in the region is planning to host a regional IAEA Workshop in Transport Security

Inspections in the coming months, in addition to national security training workshops.

During the past year, the Regulatory Authority of Cyprus, organized practical exercises and meetings for all stakeholders participating in the Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan, including stakeholders from security oriented governmental organisations.

Chairperson,

The Republic of Cyprus does not operate any nuclear power or research reactors or any other nuclear installations and its energy plans for the foreseeable future do not include nuclear energy. Nevertheless, we recognize the importance of the Nuclear Safety and Security Standards of the IAEA in ensuring nuclear safety and security worldwide. The Republic of Cyprus supports all measures and initiatives that strengthen nuclear safety and security both at national and at international level.

International and, especially, regional cooperation is of the utmost importance for nuclear safety and security considering the transboundary nature of the impact of any nuclear event. In this context transparency, information to the public and consultation with neighbouring countries likely to be affected in case of a release of radioactivity from nuclear installations and their related activities is vital, from the stage of design and throughout the whole operational life of nuclear facilities.

We believe that no Member State should underestimate the risks to nuclear security, especially in areas of the world where the risk of a terrorist attack, loss of control or cyber-attack can be significant, as well as earthquakes and other natural catastrophes. In this context, the Republic of Cyprus again calls on its neighbouring, as well as all Member States to cooperate regionally and exchange relevant information.

In concluding, I wish to express again our appreciation of the work done by the Secretariat and the Director General, and to deliver our confidence and support in the IAEA's efforts towards peace and development.

Thank you, Chairperson.