

Mr President,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here today to send a forward-looking, clear and ambitious message to the international community: we are united in our commitment to strengthen nuclear security, both nationally and globally.

Since the last International Conference in 2016, significant progress has been made. Many countries have undertaken considerable efforts to strengthen their national nuclear security regimes. International cooperation has intensified. But there is no room for complacency.

The potential threat of nuclear terrorism remains real. Just a single incident of such nature could have severe consequences. New technologies have the potential to enhance nuclear security, but they also present new risks and challenges. We therefore welcome that the threats from cyber-attacks are explicitly addressed in this Ministerial Declaration. We have to anticipate these and other new threats and develop instruments as well as strategies to counter them.

Mr President,

I wish to highlight the following five points in the Ministerial Declaration that Switzerland considers particularly important.

First, we can only be successful if we address nuclear security in all its dimensions. We therefore welcome the reaffirmation of the need to maintain effective and comprehensive nuclear security of all nuclear material. This includes nuclear material used for military purposes.

Second, nuclear security must be seen in a broader context. This message is even more important, as we approach the upcoming Review Conference of the NPT. Nuclear security is an integral and important part of the global nuclear non-proliferation architecture. It is - like nuclear safety - an inherent component of the peaceful use of nuclear applications. There is

also an evident link between nuclear disarmament and nuclear security. We therefore welcome the clear statement that progress in nuclear disarmament is critically needed.

Third, enhancing nuclear security requires a strong global legal framework. In this context, we wish to underline the importance of promoting the universalization and implementation of the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment. We encourage all States that have not yet done so to become Parties to the Convention and its Amendment. We look forward to the 2021 Conference, which Switzerland will have the honor to co-chair together with Nigeria. Switzerland recently submitted its national report in accordance with Article 14 of the Convention and encourages other Parties to also submit their reports before the 2021 Conference.

Fourth, promoting an effective nuclear security culture requires a multi-stakeholder effort. We welcome the explicit recognition in the Declaration of the contribution of regulators and industry in this regard. They are key actors alongside other governmental authorities and other entities.

Finally, we also welcome the encouragement to address the interface between nuclear security and nuclear safety. This must be done in a more systematic manner. While both are distinct, they serve the same purpose: to protect people, societies and the environment from harmful radiation.

Mr President,

Switzerland is committed to strengthening its nuclear security regime at the national level as well as to reinforcing the central role of the IAEA. As a visible sign of our commitment, we have recently decided to subscribe to the Joint Statement on Nuclear Security Implementation, also known as INFCIRC/869. We will also examine the possibility of associating ourselves with other nuclear security-related joint statements.

In 2018, Switzerland hosted an International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission. This mission concluded that the nuclear security regime in Switzerland is well-established. We look forward to a follow-up mission in the coming years. Switzerland will continue to support the IAEA's advisory services and peer reviews by providing subject matter experts.

We also recognize the importance of the IAEA's nuclear security guidance. As a member of the Nuclear Security Guidance Committee, we will continue to make our expertise available to

the Agency. Switzerland also recognizes the importance of the Nuclear Security Fund for the IAEA's activities in the area of nuclear security. Since the last International Conference, Switzerland has contributed 315'000 Euros to the Fund. However, in order to achieve financial sustainability, we are of the view that a larger contribution should come from the regular budget.

Mr President,

We hope that this Conference will help us identify a forward-looking pathway to strengthen nuclear security and the central role of the IAEA. Switzerland will engage constructively in the elaboration of the new Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025. Our collective ambition should be to make this a more strategic document. The IAEA with its almost universal membership and unique expertise is the best platform to facilitate and coordinate international cooperation. Switzerland will remain a strong supporter of the Agency's work in this area.