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International Ministerial Nuclear Power Conference 2022, Washington D.C. 26-28 October 2022

National statement of Finland

Mr / Madam President,

Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine, armed attacks at and military occupation of civilian nuclear facilities have severe implications on nuclear safety. The situation at the Zaporizhzhia site remains alarming. We recall that the seven indispensable pillars of nuclear safety and security outlined by the IAEA Director General must be applied also in situations of armed conflict.

Mr / Madam President,

In addition to the war raging in Europe, we are facing the daunting challenge of climate change. In order to curb CO2 emissions, Finland has the most ambitious climate policy in the world. Our goal is to make Finland carbon neutral by 2035. To achieve this, we need all the CO2-free energy sources available. We need renewables: Finland has one the highest shares of renewable energy sources in its energy mix in Europe. We also need nuclear energy, which is one of the main pillars of the low-carbon energy system in our country. Our electricity sector is already now largely decarbonized – the share of CO2 free electricity production is currently 87%. Nuclear may soon prove its mettle in decarbonizing also in heating and transport sectors.

Finland adopted this summer the new Climate and Energy Strategy. In addition to the climate targets, a major emphasis has been set on the security of supply. We aim at increasing self-sufficiency in energy production and nuclear energy has a key role to play in disengaging from dependences of external energy producers and in diversifying the energy mix. In Finland we have a cold climate and we also have a large-scale energy intensive industry. The competitiveness of our industry requires affordable energy and a high level of security of supply and stability in production, and nuclear energy is the instrument in our toolkit. In this context, it should be noted that nuclear energy is market-based in Finland and it is not subsidized by the state. The initiative to build nuclear power always comes from the industry and the utilities operate in the liberalized Nordic

electricity market. The same goes for the 1600 MW Olkiluoto 3 nuclear power plant unit, which is in test production phase. Regular commercial electricity production will increase our nuclear share in electricity production up to 40%.

Nuclear waste management is an essential part of responsible and sustainable use of nuclear energy. We are approaching the start of deep geological disposal of spent nuclear fuel as the first country in the world. The final disposal of spent fuel is expected to start in mid 2020's by Posiva company at Olkiluoto

Today, significant amount of investments are made to develop small modular reactors (SMR) in the world. From a technology point of view, we can foresee that some of such reactor concepts will enter commercial production by 2030. A key prerequisite for SMR technology's viability is design standardization. For enabling industrial SMR projects and other new nuclear facilities, Finland strongly supports the IAEA in the Nuclear Harmonization and Standardization Initiative (NHSI).

In the development of SMRs and in the operation of existing nuclear power plants we must keep our focus on nuclear safety and security. We would like to express our gratitude to the IAEA for the various peer reviews carried out or in the pipeline in Finland during this year, namely IPPAS, IRRS and ARTEMIS.

Finally, Finland would like to thank the IAEA and the United States for organizing this important ministerial conference. We are encountering energy policy challenges and nuclear clearly is a part of the solution.

Thank you for your attention.