

Version 20.5.2024 8h30

## **National statement of Finland**

### **International Conference on Nuclear Security: Shaping the Future 20-24 May 2024, Vienna, Austria**

Mr/Ms Chair, Excellencies,

Let me begin by thanking the IAEA and Director General Grossi for organising this important conference. **The Agency provides a central forum** for international cooperation in nuclear security.

I would also like to thank the co-chairs, **Australia and Kazakhstan**, for their hard work on the preparation of this Ministerial Conference. We regret that consensus on the Ministerial Declaration could not be found despite the inclusive and transparent preparatory process. Finland aligns itself with the **Co-Presidents' Joint Statement**.

In addition to the statement by the European Union, allow me to make the following national remarks.

Esteemed Mr/Ms Chair, Excellencies,

Nuclear security is **above all a positive, constructive factor** for successful and sustainable uses of nuclear technologies and not its obstacle.

Finland continues to **call for a high level of nuclear security**. We need a **comprehensive approach** to nuclear safety and security, since they are mutually reinforcing.

We are **concerned about threats** to nuclear security, both old and emerging ones. The longstanding work to counter the threat of nuclear terrorism through international cooperation must be continued. To mention a newer area, **cyber threats** to computer security at nuclear facilities must be addressed. The recommendations from the International Conference on Computer Security held in June 2023 must be taken into account.

**Efficient detection and response measures** are needed in security events involving nuclear or other radioactive material out of regulatory control.

Finland calls upon all States that have not yet done **so to accede to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials**, as amended, since it is a key instrument in this field.

Excellencies,

The **world needs more climate-friendly energy and nuclear power can be part of the solution**. Many new users have set their sights **on Small Modular Reactors**. To further guarantee the viability and security of this technology, Finland supports the IAEA's work on SMR nuclear security. We also support the ongoing IAEA work on the Nuclear Harmonisation and Standardisation Initiative. I would like to add one aspect: we need a greater inclusiveness in this work. In this respect, gender equality is of fundamental importance.

Safe and responsible use of nuclear power **calls for attention also to the end of the fuel cycle**. Finland is the first to build a geological repository for spent nuclear fuel. Nuclear security, safeguards, and **safety by design** are key features of this solution, developed hand in hand with the IAEA and the European Commission.

For the IAEA to fulfill its key role, **the financing of the nuclear security work** should be placed on a firm footing. While we appreciate voluntary contributions these activities should be put under the Agency's regular budget to guarantee adequate resources. Finland has over the years contributed to IAEA nuclear security activities with funding and expertise, and plan to do so also this year.

Excellencies,

Finland strongly condemns Russia's war of aggression to Ukraine and the illegal and irresponsible seizure of the Ukrainian nuclear power plant in Zaporizhzhia. Following the Russian aggression the **situation of nuclear security in Ukraine**, and the challenges to nuclear security it implies, continue to raise a particular concern. We support the work of the IAEA to assist Ukraine in this field.

The armed conflict and pandemic has shown us that nuclear security is part of risk and continuity management, and part of resilience. **It is important to conduct exercises** to plan for crisis scenarios. National decisions may have global impact. Accountability is needed.

Mr/Ms Chair,

To conclude: Finland is currently revising its national nuclear legislation and regulations, to better facilitate technology independent licensing of SMRs. At the same time it is important to ensure **high level of nuclear security, safety, and safeguards**. **Finland remains committed to actively participate and contribute to nuclear security.**

Thank you.