

S T A T E M E N T

**of the head of delegation of the Republic of Azerbaijan
at the International Conference on Nuclear Security:
Commitments and Actions
Vienna, Austria
5–9 December 2016**

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

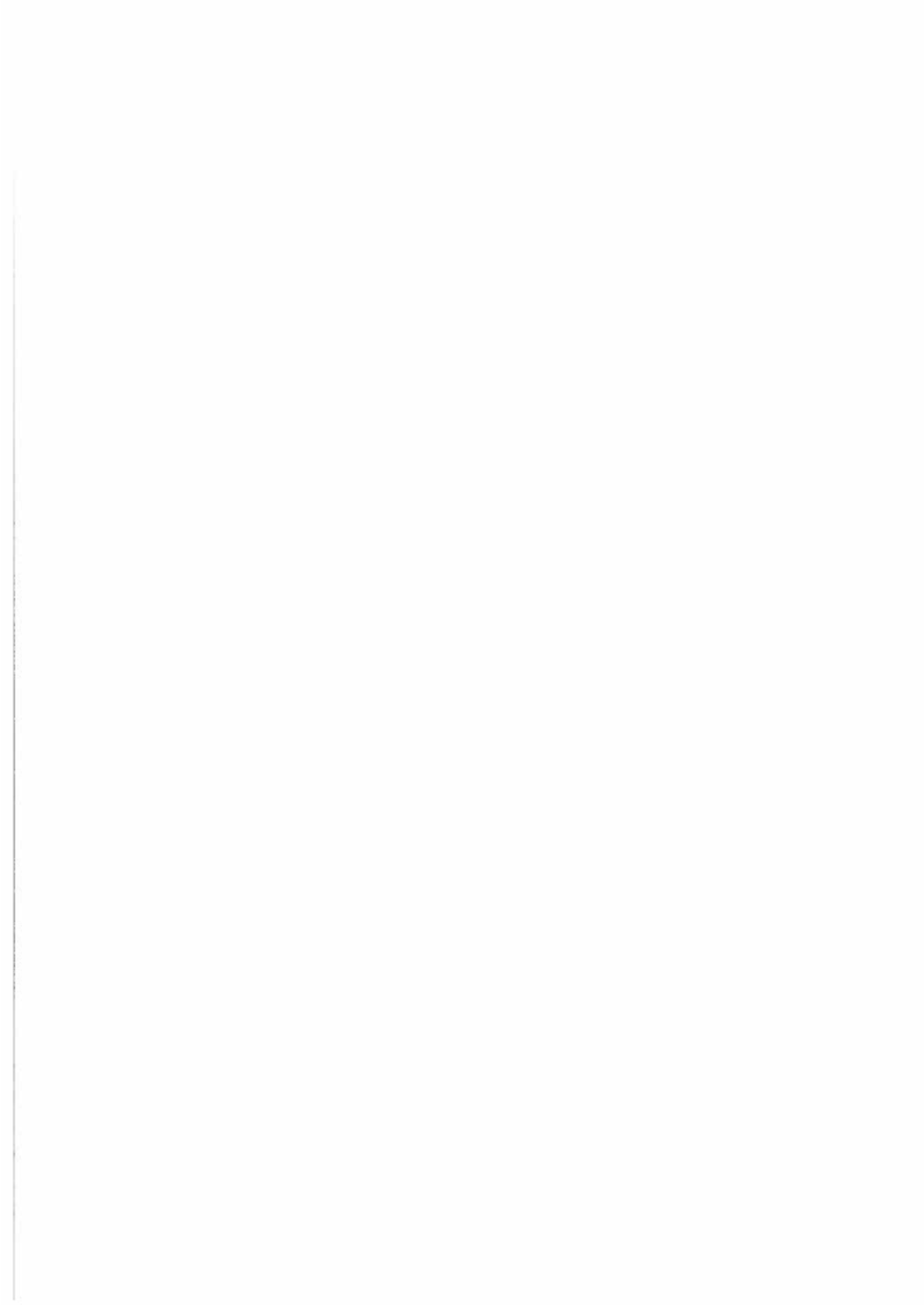
I would like to start by expressing our appreciation to H.E. Mr. Byung-se Yun, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Korea for his able Presidency of this important Conference.

We are also grateful to the Director General H.E. Mr. Yukiya Amano and all IAEA staff for their dedicated efforts towards facilitating the preparation of the Conference.

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to maintaining and further strengthening nuclear security, and supports all endeavors towards enhancing the international cooperation, which we believe is a vital element of our efforts in the nuclear security field.

By recognizing and commending the key role of the IAEA in developing nuclear security regulations and standards, Azerbaijan has achieved a successful cooperation with the Agency on various aspects of nuclear security.

Our country has joined the major international treaties such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and recently ratified the Amendment to this document.



At domestic level we have put in place a robust safety and security measures. Our activities in this field have always been target-oriented and conducted in the spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

An enormous work is being done on elaboration and adoption of legislation in Azerbaijan on control over radiation security.

The normative acts and regulations strictly banning import of nuclear and radiation wastes into Azerbaijan have been adopted.

With the assistance of IAEA, the laws and other legislative acts of Azerbaijan concerning registration and control of nuclear and radioactive materials are brought into compliance with international standards.

In the face of persistent threat of radical extremism and terrorism and due to our geographic proximity to the seat of tension, we attach the utmost importance to the prevention of use of our territory as a transit route for illicit nuclear trafficking.

In close cooperation with our international partners, we have developed a comprehensive national export control system with a solid legislation basis in line with international standards.

Up to date, our national export control system has proved itself as a reliable mechanism in preventing illicit nuclear trafficking.

Unfortunately, due to the continued occupation of 20% of our territories by the Republic of Armenia, we are unable to provide proper control along a substantial part of our borders with Armenia and a 130 km-long section of our borders with Iran.

We believe that responsibility for nuclear security rests entirely on the State, with an understanding that, it should protect and secure all nuclear and other radioactive materials under its control.

During his yesterday's speech Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia highlighted the excellent record of ensuring security and safety of Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant.

Unfortunately, the facts on the ground reveal the opposite, which in combination with the persistent denial of the reality by Armenian side, causes a great concern for us and other states in the region.

We would like to draw the attention to the recent information about smuggling of nuclear and radioactive materials in Armenia.

The latest occasion, took place in April 2016, when three Armenian citizens, previously worked in Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant were detained on the Georgian border, who intended to deliver nuclear materials to the Middle East region.

Repeated seizures at the Armenian-Georgian border and high number of Armenian nationals involved in nuclear trafficking and smuggling, once more reminds us about the risks deriving from Metsamor nuclear power plant for the nuclear security of the region.

Moreover, the concerns of Azerbaijan and other states in the region, are due to the fact that, Metsamor Power Plant is an old generation installation located in a seismically active zone. This is the reason why many international bodies have qualified it as dangerous and demanded to stop its functioning.

Against this background, Azerbaijan deems it necessary that the IAEA should take under strict control and assess the systematic cases of smuggling of nuclear and radioactive materials.

Mr. President,

I would like to once again stress that Azerbaijan is committed to continue cooperation with international organizations and our partners in strengthening nuclear security in the region and around the world and reducing threats emanating from illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials and counts on support and cooperation of the IAEA in this matter. Thank you for your attention.

