



STATEMENT OF GEORGIA

Mr. David DONDUA, Deputy Minister

Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions
(5-9 December, 2016 Vienna)

Thank you, Mr. President.

The delegation of Georgia congratulates you on your election to the Presidency of the International Conference on Nuclear Security and assures you of its full cooperation.

I am delighted to be here in Vienna and address the notable audience as the representative of the Government of Georgia.

Our presence here sends an important message that the world is serious about enhancing global efforts to protect nuclear and other radioactive material - and associated facilities - from malicious acts.

Much has been achieved in the past decade. Many countries have taken effective measures to prevent theft, sabotage, unauthorized access, illegal transfer, or other malicious acts involving nuclear or other radioactive material.

Nevertheless, we still face significant challenges tied with environment protection, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction as well as the threat that nuclear materials and technologies will not end up in terrorists' hands.

Increasing threats emanating from various terrorist groups make the possibility of exploitation of security vulnerabilities with criminal intent highly probable, while some actors have already demonstrated acute interest in acquiring weapons of mass destruction to terrorize the world.

We believe that the major challenges still prevalent in the field of non-proliferation need to be dealt comprehensively through the combined efforts of the international community. Consolidated efforts based on international cooperation acquire an increasingly important role to strengthen legitimacy of responses against this threat.

To effectively prevent terrorists from acquiring WMD, we have to enhance the existing security architecture and reinforce the physical security of sensitive materials. In this regard, full compliance with the obligations under the relevant international arrangements, such as NPT, CWC, BWC, UNSCR 1540 and etc. must stand out as a priority for the International Community.

Political commitment is crucial to all of us in developing the policies, strategies and systems to strengthen nuclear security, nationally, regionally and globally.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The proliferation of the nuclear and radioactive materials remains a subject of serious concern for Georgia, taking into account the close proximity to the region posing a high risk of proliferation.

In this context, let me highlight some practical activities in countering nuclear smuggling:

In August 2015 and January 2016, Georgian Security Service detected two cases of illicit trafficking of radioactive materials. Cesium 135 and Cesium 137 were seized and 8 people held liable.

In April 2016, two cases of illegal turnover were suppressed. One of the cases was detected in April 14, when Uranium-238 was seized and 6 persons (*3 citizens of Georgia and 3 citizens of Armenia*) were arrested. Another case of detecting low enriched uranium (1.6 kg) was detected, 5 citizens of Georgia were arrested. Investigation is ongoing.

In 2006-2016, 25 cases of illicit turnover of radioactive materials have been revealed, 10 of which were cases from the occupied territories of Georgia. 75 persons in total faced criminal charges.

Considering the challenges in the field allow me briefly elaborate the steps Georgia took in recent years:

By the decision of the Government of Georgia the National CBRN Council was formed. The Council with active involvement of *EU, US and United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI)*, elaborated and the Government adopted the National CBRN Threat Reduction Strategy in 2014. CBRN National Action Plan 2015 – 2019 was adopted in March 2015;

Georgian Government together with the Governments of Philippines and Morocco initiated the establishment of the *UN Group of Friends on the CBRN Risk Mitigation and Security Governance*. The Group will serve to address and promote various CBRN related topics at the United Nations, including the Security Council, by actively engaging with member states, donor countries and the UN Secretariat. It'll will promote the activities aimed at building capabilities between and among partner States, promote the implementation of the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and subsequent relevant resolutions;

Georgia as a regional hub for international cooperation and activities on the CBRN security has been hosting global events such as the International Non-proliferation Forums on regular basis. Namely, Tbilisi International Forum Challenges and Responses to Nuclear Security and Non-Proliferation in 2015; The World Congress on CBRN Science and Consequence Management organized in 2014 and 2016;

Department of Ministry of Environment and Natural Resources Protection of Georgia was transformed to the legal entity of public law in order to increase the level of effective independence of regulatory body of Georgia. The effective independence of the Agency is guaranteed by the legislative amendments preceded institutional changes;

As a result of legislative Amendments, the Department of Radioactive Waste Management was created that became the operator of radioactive waste facilities. Thus, after a long period of time, radioactive waste storage and disposal facilities fall under the full State control on the nationwide level. The legal framework for radioactive waste management was developed;

Georgia plans to adopt National Strategy on Radioactive Waste Management that is supposed to be the huge step towards implementing national and international standards or requirements. Strategy and supplementary action plan will be approved before the 1st of January, 2017.

Herewith let me emphasize that Georgia enjoys close cooperation with International Atomic Energy Agency and implements its Technical Cooperation Programs. As part of international contribution, we plan to accede to the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency in the nearest future.

Mr. President,

Today I represent Georgia as a non-nuclear state. The nuclear-free status was gained after removal of 1.83 kg of HEU from the Breeder-1 Neutron Source in December, 2015. Repatriation of high-enriched uranium was the responsive step towards Hague Communique of Nuclear Security Summit 2014. This fact makes obvious the level of responsibility Georgia reveals towards international obligations and initiatives.

In closing, I would like to reiterate our readiness for an open and constructive cooperation and thank all the participants of the conference for their most valuable contributions.

I thank you.

