

**Statement by Minister Seán Kyne, TD**  
**Minister of State for Natural Resources**  
**IRELAND**

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to participate in this High Level Conference on the very important topic of Nuclear Security and I wish to commend Director General Amano for convening the Conference. I would state at the outset that Ireland is fully supportive of the Agency's contribution in this area.

May I also take this opportunity to thank you, Mr Chairman, for the effort you have expended in preparing an interesting and challenging Conference programme. I wish you every success for the Conference and I know that we are in good hands with you in the chair.

***Ireland and Nuclear Energy and Technologies***

Mr Chairman,

Ireland's position remains that we fully recognise and respect the sovereign right of every State to develop nuclear technologies for the generation of energy and other peaceful uses. While Ireland maintains a policy of not using nuclear energy for the generation of electricity, we greatly value and benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies. We are, however, also conscious of the risks which may be associated with nuclear power and technologies, in on-going risk of malicious acts and of nuclear terrorism.

## *Ireland and the Agency*

Mr. Chairman,

Ireland believes in a strong international rule of law, and we have always been committed to effective multilateralism as the best way of achieving and upholding the rule of law, ensuring international peace and security, and advancing international cooperation. Ireland has been associated in particular, from the outset, with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as the multilateral basis for achieving complete nuclear disarmament, preventing nuclear proliferation, and facilitating the peaceful uses of nuclear energy subject to strict international controls and standards.

We do not wish to see a continuation of the situation whereby significant progress continues to be made in the areas of non-proliferation and the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies, while progress in the area of disarmament remains disappointingly limited. We are pleased to note that this year's IAEA General Conference adopted by consensus a resolution which stresses "that progress in nuclear disarmament is critically needed" [and we are glad that this call has been repeated in the ministerial declaration we have just adopted/are about to adopt.] Ireland calls on those states that have not yet done so, to join the Treaty as non-nuclear weapon states. The IAEA is central to the NPT's non-proliferation and peaceful uses objectives, and the Agency deserves our fullest support in this important work. I believe the Agency itself provides an example of multilateralism at its most effective and we believe that there is a clear and irrefutable link between nuclear security and disarmament.

Since our admission as a member state in 1969, Ireland has greatly valued and benefitted from our membership of the IAEA. We attach enormous importance

to the vital and unique role the IAEA plays in promoting safe, secure and peaceful nuclear technologies.

### *The Agency and Nuclear Security*

The IAEA has been a key support to States in the area of nuclear security over many decades. The Agency's recommendations in this area – entitled *The Physical Protection of Nuclear Material*, which were first issued in 1975 – are one of the clearest examples of the practical support which the Agency provides to States. I would like to take this opportunity to note that Ireland has ratified the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material which entered into force on 8 May, 2016.

The IAEA's role in the area of nuclear security is a critical and central element of the Agency's work. I note, in particular, the Agency's pro-active approach to addressing the threats posed by the illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive material- truly a vital aspect of the Agency's work given the events of the last year or so.

Ireland greatly values its membership of the IAEA and we support the Agency's on-going efforts to enhance nuclear safety. Ireland regards the 5<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting of the Joint Convention on Spent Fuel Management and Radioactive Waste Management, which took place in May of this year as an important commitment by States of their support for the objective of achieving and maintaining a high level of safety worldwide.

The IAEA has also been to the forefront of efforts in combating the threats posed by malicious acts and by nuclear terrorism. I commend the Agency's work in this area and we fully support the work being done including the Agency's "Nuclear Security Plan for 2014 – 2017".

Enhancing global efforts in this area are a truly collective responsibility but individual states also have a duty of care in this regard. Ireland is no exception and we will avail fully of any opportunity to enrich and enhance our capabilities in this area. To this end we have participated in exercises organised through the Coastal and Shipping States Dialogue and look forward to future fruitful engagement with that process. We have also recently participated in the case study scenario organised by our colleagues in the EU Commission and are in the process of formalising a domestic structure to best position the various agencies of our State to combat the egregious challenges we hope we never have to face but nonetheless must be prepared for.

In this regard it is worth repeating what the Director General noted in his introduction to the 2013 report on the Nuclear Security Plan: 2014 – 2017: “The risk that nuclear or other radioactive material could be used in criminal or intentional unauthorized acts remains a matter of concern internationally and continues to be regarded as a threat to international security”.

Standing still is not an option and clearly we must equip ourselves with the most appropriate structures, systems and procedures to ensure that we have effective national systems in place to facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear energy and enhancing global efforts to combat nuclear terrorism.

### ***Conclusion***

In conclusion, Mr Chairman, it is entirely appropriate that we use the opportunity of this conference to take stock in assessing lessons learned in the area of nuclear security; to identify those areas for further action; and to act collectively for the common good.

We welcome the ongoing contribution which the IAEA is making in this area. I wish to assure the Agency of Ireland's full support in implementing the Nuclear Security Plan for 2014 – 2017.

I believe that, working together, we can continue to protect and strengthen our framework for the peaceful, safe and secure uses of nuclear energy.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

ENDS

