

Statement by Ambassador Marco Hennis
Resident Representative of the Kingdom of the
Netherlands
International Conference on Nuclear Security: Commitments and Actions
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Director-General, Excellencies, ladies and gentlemen,

Needless to say that my delegation fully aligns itself with the EU statement. In a national capacity, I would like to make the following remarks. Gathered here on the occasion of this second ministerial conference on nuclear security, we are able to point to a number of significant achievements since we last met three years ago that have served to strengthen the global architecture.

Chief among these is the entry into force of the amended CPPNM. The Netherlands joins others in congratulating the Agency on all its efforts to realize this milestone, and we encourage those states that have not yet done so to become party to this important instrument. It is now up to us to ensure full implementation of the amended Convention's expanded scope. In 5 years' time, the State Parties will come together to review the achievements and assess whether the Convention's provisions are still adequate.

But no matter how important implementation of the amended treaty is, nuclear security goes beyond the scope of any single instrument. For it to be effective and comprehensive, States will need to take a number of practical steps. These steps include bolstering physical protection and establishing systems of accounting and control of all materials and sources. To that end, the Agency has developed nuclear security recommendations as essential guidance for states in order to establish comprehensive regimes and meet their international commitments, including the amended CPPNM. States are highly encouraged to incorporate these recommendations into their domestic laws and regulations.

In fact, several states have committed to an initiative to further strengthen nuclear security implementation. The initiative, INFCIRC/869, involves a pledge to reflect the international guidance in national nuclear security regimes. In addition, the states have agreed to request IAEA advisory missions and ensure demonstrable competence of people with security responsibilities. This initiative represents a concrete step toward a more robust international framework, and sends a clear message of commitment to continuously improving nuclear security. We welcome the 39 states that have so far subscribed to INFCIRC/869, and in this regard we would like to thank Senegal for its announcement made yesterday.

As a further step to strengthen the key IAEA guidance documents, the Netherlands would strongly support the endorsement of the nuclear security recommendations by the Board of Governors, as it did with the Fundamentals. This approach, similar to the one for nuclear safety standards, would ensure that the guidance is applied by the Agency to its nuclear security operations. It would also reinforce the Nuclear Security Series recommendations that, particularly in the case of INFCIRC/225, have for years formed the basis for establishing and maintaining national regimes.

I would lastly like to take this opportunity to commend the Secretariat and its Division of Nuclear Security for its excellent work in this area. However, in order to continue carrying out this work and assisting member states with establishing and strengthening their domestic regimes, it is imperative for the Agency to have sufficient resources. The Agency's role in nuclear security and the division's work should be better reflected in the regular budget. The activities cannot be covered by the Nuclear Security Fund alone. The Netherlands has been a longstanding contributor to the Fund and will continue to do so. We cannot repeatedly proclaim the Agency's central role in nuclear security and increase demands for its expertise without providing it with adequate means. In this regard we would like to underscore the importance of the Ministerial Declaration, which highlights the central role of the agency in nuclear security. Although, also in our view, the Declaration does not fully reflect all the policy objectives we deem necessary, we believe that it provides a basis to build upon our important work in the field of nuclear security the coming years.

Ladies and gentlemen,

With the end of the Nuclear Security Summit process, these regular high-level meetings have only gained in importance. The participation of officials from across the spectrum of IAEA member States shows that we recognize the need for continuous improvement of global nuclear security. It is in our common interest. And while much has been achieved, much still remains to be done. Evolving threats require us to maintain our vigilance. Let's, therefore, use the opportunity of these major international conferences to harness the momentum and drive progress forward.

Thank you.