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IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology

28 – 30 November 2018

Statement by

Mr. Benoît Revaz

**State Secretary and Director of the Swiss Federal Office of Energy
Switzerland**

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Mr. Co-Chair,
Director General,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

We are gathered here today to send a clear, ambitious and forward-looking message to the international community on the great potential of nuclear science and technology for sustainable global development.

Switzerland welcomes the activities of the IAEA aimed at the further development of nuclear science and technology and its role as a global coordinator in this area. We support strengthening the IAEA in this context. This is in line with our new Energy Strategy 2050, which continues to promote Switzerland's nuclear science and technology activities.

These activities of the IAEA are also in alignment with Switzerland's objectives regarding the implementation of the international sustainable development agenda. Furthermore, we consider the promotion of nuclear science and technology to be a concrete manifestation of peaceful nuclear cooperation as enshrined in the NPT.

One of the main results of this Conference will be the adoption of a Ministerial Declaration. In Switzerland's view, this document contains a long-term, forward-looking political vision for the development of nuclear science and technology and strengthens the role of the IAEA in this area.

Let me highlight the following points to which Switzerland is particularly committed:

Since its adoption in 2015, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development has been the guiding framework for Switzerland's commitment to sustainable development at the national and international level. It underpins the commitment of my country to environmentally and socially responsible economic development within planetary borders, as well as to peace and compliance with international law and human rights. From the outset, Switzerland played a key role in drawing up the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Switzerland fully recognizes the great potential of the applications of nuclear science and technology and the importance of the role of the IAEA in this area for the achievement of the SDGs contained in the 2030 Agenda.

Switzerland fully supports the role of the IAEA's Technical Cooperation programme to promote and deliver civilian nuclear applications and technologies. These activities enable Member States to exploit the benefits of radiation and isotopes in medicine, agriculture, water management and environmental protection in a safe, secure and sustainable manner. Technical cooperation activities have to be geared to the needs of the requesting Member States. As a major contributor to the Technical Cooperation Fund, it is also of interest to Switzerland that the financial resources of donors are utilized efficiently and effectively.

Switzerland wishes to highlight the importance of the IAEA laboratories in Seibersdorf, Vienna and Monaco. The analytical laboratory of radioactive materials in Seibersdorf has undergone extensive modernization in recent years. Switzerland has contributed financially to the ReNuAL and ReNuAL+ projects to enable the IAEA to fulfil its mission in the best possible way. It is my pleasure to announce that my country will provide an additional € 50'000 for the calibration bench of the LINAC facility.

Furthermore, the promotion of cooperation between the IAEA and Member States as well as among Member States is a major pillar of Swiss efforts in radiation research. This includes strengthening the Collaborating Centers of the IAEA, a scientific network between the Agency and selected world-class leading laboratories. Switzerland's Spiez Laboratory was designated in 2017 as a Collaborating Center in the field of environmental analytics and nuclear forensics. The Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL), together with the Paul Scherrer Institute (PSI), has applied to become a Collaborating Center in the field of nuclear energy research. Another project is currently being implemented by the Aquatic Research Institute of the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich and the IAEA in groundwater research to explore pollutants that affect hundreds of millions of people worldwide causing minor to severe health problems.

Mr. Co-Chair,

In conclusion, let me underline Switzerland's firm hope that this Conference will create new momentum for international collaboration in nuclear science and technology in general and for the Agency's role in particular. Switzerland will continue its active engagement to assist Member States in benefitting from the peaceful use of the atom for sustainable development and human health. We encourage all Member States to actively support the efforts of the Agency with respect to nuclear science and technology. Switzerland also supports the convening of a follow-up Ministerial Conference in the coming years.

I thank you for your attention.