

Mr Chairman, Ladies and Gentlemen,

My delegation aligns itself with the statement delivered by Croatia on behalf of the European Union. We would like to add the following in a national capacity.

I commend Director General Grossi for convening this High Level Conference on Nuclear Security, and the co-chairs and Agency for all of the preparatory work. As at the 2013 and 2016 nuclear security conferences, Ireland had intended to be represented again today at Ministerial level. We regret that, due to Parliamentary elections last Saturday, this has not proved possible.

NPT and Ireland's general position

Mr. Chairman,

Ireland is committed to effective multilateralism to achieve and uphold the rule of law, thereby ensuring international peace and security and advancing international cooperation. Consistent with this approach, we are fully committed to working with our partners in the

disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear technologies. Ireland views the three pillars as being interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

It is in this context that Ireland places its commitment to strengthening nuclear security. Ireland is committed to working towards the highest international level of nuclear security, and is a member of the NSCG/Nuclear Security Contact Group.

While it is of crucial importance to keep nuclear material out of the hands of terrorists and other non-state actors, nuclear security for us does not end there. As with the vast majority of UN Member States, Ireland is convinced that the existence of nuclear weapons anywhere makes the world a less secure place.

We are committed to work for the total elimination of nuclear weapons, which we see as vital for humanity, and fully consistent with the NPT. It is for this reason that Ireland has been to the forefront in working for and promoting the TPNW – the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons.

other weapons of mass destruction – and thus providing enhanced security for all the people of the planet.

Ireland and Nuclear Energy and Technologies

Mr Chairman,

Ireland's recognises 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 applications of nuclear technologies. We are, however, also conscious of the risks associated with nuclear power and technologies, in particular the on-going risk of malicious acts and of nuclear terrorism.

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 – ***The Physical Protection of Nuclear Material*** - first issued in 1975 – are one of the clearest examples of the practical support, which the Agency provides to States

to the Convention that entered into force on 8 May, 2016. We support the resolution at IAEA 2019 General Conference encouraging “the Agency to continue efforts to promote further adherence to the Amendment with the aim of its universalization”. We recognise that instruments of this nature could realise their full potential only with universal ratification since security is only as strong as the weakest link.

Ireland believes that continuous improvement should be sought in the international nuclear security environment. The Ministerial Declaration, which we will adopt at this Conference, builds upon the 2016 Declaration and will further strengthen nuclear security globally. We welcome the reaffirmation in the 2020 Declaration of the link between nuclear security and multilateral nuclear disarmament. The Declaration rightly stresses that the latter is now critically needed. The fact that a mere 17% of fissionable material worldwide is earmarked for civilian use speaks for itself. Ideally, our work on nuclear security should include all nuclear material, including that in military holdings.

We believe that the IAEA's work on nuclear security is a

of the Agency's technical cooperation and based on a secure and sustainable funding base.

Previous Nuclear Security Plans specifically recognised that "The risk that nuclear or other radioactive material could be used in malicious acts remains high and is regarded as a serious threat to international peace and security." Regrettably this position remains unchanged today, and indeed emerging technologies bring with them new forms of threats, including cyber threats, to nuclear security. It is therefore vital that efforts continue to ensure that states are equipped with the most appropriate structures, systems and procedures to facilitate the peaceful use of nuclear energy and that global efforts to combat nuclear terrorism are enhanced.

Coastal and Shipping States

For many years, the IAEA has promoted greater communication in the area of maritime transport of radioactive material primarily through supporting dialogue between coastal and shipping states. As an island state, this area is of particular interest to Ireland and is coherent with the Agency's pro-active approach to addressing the

objectives of deepening trust between partners, while preserving and, indeed, enhancing the security of these transports. With our UK and French colleagues, Ireland co-chaired the **Coastal and Shipping States** Group in Vienna in 2017-2019. In this context we organised a successful workshop on the maritime transport of nuclear material in Dublin last May. Ireland will continue to be committed to the highest standards of security and safety, both in the transport of nuclear material and in general.

Gender Parity

Today¹ we mark the International Day of Women and Girls in Science. Ireland emphasises the importance of promoting the equal, full and effective participation of both women and men in all areas of nuclear security. We would like to compliment Director General Grossi for his strong commitments in this important area. We are a founding member of the Vienna-based GFWIN/Group of Friends of Women in Nuclear, which is growing and now represents 34 Member States. Ireland is convinced that achieving gender parity is not just a women's issue, but an issue closely linked to overall effectiveness.

Conclusion

in the area of nuclear security; to identify those areas for further action; and to act collectively for the common good.

Thank you Mr. Chairman,

ENDS