

Statement by Ambassador António de Almeida Ribeiro  
Resident Representative of Portugal to the IAEA,  
on the occasion of the International Conference on Nuclear Security  
ICONS 2020  
Vienna, 10-14 February 2020

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Portugal fully aligns itself with the statement delivered by Sweden on behalf of the European Union and fully supports the Ministerial Declaration adopted by this Conference.

Portugal would like to thank DG Grossi and the Secretariat for organizing this important event and to express our gratitude to the co-presidents of the Conference, Panama and Romania, for their guidance and excellent work, and to Bulgaria and Egypt in their capacity of co-chairs of the scientific and technical segment. We are confident that this third ICONS will make important contributions to global nuclear security. It goes without saying that Portugal strongly supports achieving the highest possible level of nuclear security worldwide, thus contributing to ensuring the protection of people and the environment. While maintaining a policy of not using nuclear energy for the generation of electricity, we benefit from the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies and are fully aware of the threats posed by criminal or intentional unauthorized acts involving, or

directed at, nuclear material or other radioactive material, facilities or associated activities.

Nuclear security is the responsibility of each individual State, but international cooperation is vital to support States in establishing and maintaining effective nuclear security regimes. The central role of the IAEA in facilitating such cooperation and providing assistance to States is well known. The Agency's role reflects its wide membership, mandate, unique expertise and long experience, providing critical support to achieving effective nuclear security globally. In this regard, Portugal commends the Agency and fully supports the work being done under the Nuclear Security Plan 2018-2021.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Portugal is Party, or adheres, to all relevant international nuclear security instruments including the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. In this last regard, Portugal takes part in several initiatives such as the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and the Proliferation Security Initiative.

In addition, my country stands ready to continue to contribute to the IAEA's efforts in strengthening nuclear security at all levels and is pleased to note the presence of a Portuguese legal expert in this conference, invited as chairperson of a technical session.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

We meet here today because we want our citizens and societies to enjoy the benefits of the peaceful uses of the atom in a safe and secure world. We thus urge the IAEA not to forego its leading role in nuclear security and to convene, on a regular basis, international conferences that assess the global progress in addressing the issues we'll be discussing in the days ahead. Portugal strongly encourages the IAEA to do so, and takes this opportunity to reiterate its strong and continued support to the Agency. Let me assure you of my delegation's full cooperation and my country's long lasting commitment to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation.

I thank you.