

Statement by Ms. Anke ter Hoeve-van Heek
Deputy Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of the
Netherlands to the International Atomic Energy Agency

19 September 2018, Vienna

Madam President, distinguished delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me first join previous speakers, Madam President, in congratulating you on your presidency of this 62nd General Conference.

Madam President,

The Netherlands fully aligns itself with the statement made by Austria on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to make the following remarks from a national perspective.

Non-Proliferation

The Netherlands places the highest priority on strengthening the nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation regime, with the NPT as its cornerstone, as a matter fundamental to international peace and security. Without a robust and effective system of verification, the regime cannot exist. The IAEA's role therefore remains crucial, and the Agency must be assured of the ability and tools necessary to carry out this essential function effectively and efficiently.

The Agency has demonstrated time and again that it is up to the task. It has been able to prepare for and adapt to changing circumstances, *[taking on new or additional verification tasks where necessary]*. The Netherlands commends and continues to fully support the Agency's role in verifying Iran's nuclear-related commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. The most recent report shows again that Iran is verifiably acting in accordance with its commitments under the JCPOA. We strongly encourage continued commitment to and full implementation of the JCPOA.

The Netherlands also commends the IAEA for maintaining its readiness to send inspectors to North Korea on short notice, should conditions permit.

Safeguards

Madam President,

To support the Agency's role in providing assurances against nuclear proliferation, we must continue to work to strengthen the **safeguards** system. The Netherlands strongly supports the universalization of the Additional Protocol, which together with a comprehensive safeguards agreement, constitutes the current standard of verification under the NPT. We must also recognize and address the mounting safeguards burden. To that end, we support the implementation and further development of state-level approaches, as a reflection of the need for a safeguards system that is responsive to change. State-level approaches are necessary mechanisms to increase efficiency and effectiveness of the safeguards regime.

Nuclear Security and Safety

Madam President,

[To enjoy the myriad peaceful applications of nuclear energy, we must ensure that the highest levels of security and safety are being met.] The Netherlands fully supports the Agency's central and coordinating role in strengthening **nuclear security** worldwide, and we encourage the agency to actively and manifestly fulfill this role.

The Agency should be enabled to effectively implement its nuclear security tasks. While we continue to contribute to the Nuclear Security Fund, we emphasize the need for sustainable reliable funding and the allocation of sufficient regular budget funds to implement the Nuclear Security Program.

We call on all states to become party to and fully implement the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM), and other relevant nuclear security instruments. The review Conference in 2021 will be an important moment to evaluate the implementation and adequacy of this treaty. We call on the Agency to launch the preparatory process as soon as possible, and encourage all parties to engage actively.

Nuclear security can be strengthened both nationally and on an international scale if countries implement the IAEA Nuclear Security Fundamentals and recommendations in their national laws and regulations. Already 38 States are working towards this end, having expressed their national commitment in INFCIRC/869. This Joint Statement is open for all IAEA Member States.

[The Netherlands is pleased to host a regional IAEA workshop on the physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities this October in Delft. The workshop will establish awareness of the need for an integrated system of physical protection of nuclear material and nuclear facilities that is effective against such threats as radiological sabotage and theft of nuclear material.]

One of the important peaceful applications of nuclear energy is the production of medical isotopes. As one of the largest producers of such isotopes in the world, the Netherlands is proud to have completed the conversion from HEU to LEU fuel for this process this year. *[We now use LEU for both fuel and targets, and have thereby fulfilled our commitment made at the highest political level during the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul. We encourage other states to similarly promote the minimization of the use of HEU in civilian applications.]*

Nuclear safety is another essential element enabling peaceful uses of nuclear energy. The Netherlands continues to work to improve its robust domestic framework for nuclear safety. To this end, we will host an IRRS follow-up mission later this year.

Even with stringent safety systems in place, incidents may occur, and potential impacts can be felt beyond national borders. For that reason, it is essential to share information through IAEA reporting mechanisms in the interest of transparency and public trust.

The Netherlands recognizes the valuable contribution of the **peaceful uses** of nuclear energy for reaching the Sustainable Development Goals and remains a strong supporter of the **IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme**. We continue to pay our full target share to the Technical Cooperation Fund in time. We call upon all Member States to also pay their target shares and thereby enable the Agency to help countries fulfilling their ambitions in the field of nuclear technology and development.

Madam President,

The IAEA plays a fundamental role in helping ensure the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and safeguards and in facilitating international cooperation. We stress the importance of efficiency and effectiveness of all Agency's activities, which can be facilitated by applying a one-house approach. While recognizing the steps that have been taken, we think the Agency would also benefit from further efforts to improve gender balance among staff members, with more women in professional and management positions.

Madam President,

In order to share in the benefits of atomic energy, we must work together to ensure our shared interests and goals are met.

Thank you, Madam President.