

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the
Republic of Azerbaijan
International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and Strengthening
Efforts**

Vienna, 10 February 2020

**Dear Co-Presidents,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,**

I would like to start by expressing our appreciation to His Excellency Mr. Bogdan Aurescu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania and His Excellency Mr. Federico Alfaro, Vice minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Panama for their able co-presidencies in this important Conference.

We are also grateful to the Director General and all IAEA staff for their dedicated efforts towards facilitating the preparation of the Conference.

I would like also to take this opportunity once again to congratulate H.E. Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi on his appointment as a Director General and express our full readiness to cooperate with him in fulfillment of his mandate.

Excellencies,

Azerbaijan closely follows the ongoing worldwide trends in nuclear security. We support existing nuclear security initiatives and pay special attention to the international multilateral mechanisms in this area. Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) is the backbone of the global regime for nuclear disarmament, non-proliferation and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Sharing international community's concerns about nuclear security issues, especially regarding proliferation of nuclear weapons, Azerbaijan ratified NPT after regaining its independence and actively supported extension of the Treaty indefinitely in 1995.

We remain concerned about existing and emerging nuclear security threats and committed to addressing them. In the current security environment the possibility of using nuclear or other radioactive material for malicious purposes cannot be ruled out. The global nature of this challenge requires concerted action from all States. Non-compliance with NPT-safeguards agreements threatens sustainability of the non-proliferation regime and security of Member States. In this regard, IAEA safeguards are unique contribution to international peace and security.

We welcome the Agency's verification and monitoring activities in line with the UN Security Council Resolutions 2231. We underscore the significance of Joint

Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) which reflects the success of the multilateral negotiations and diplomacy and acknowledge that the successful implementation of JCPOA requires the complete fulfilment of the obligations by all the parties for allowing them to fully enjoy the benefits provided in JCPOA.

Excellencies,

International cooperation has always been at the center of our efforts in the field of nuclear security and safety. We believe that the progress achieved in this area strengthens peace and security and promotes confidence. Our activities in this field have always been target-oriented and conducted in the spirit of mutual respect and cooperation.

We recognize and commend the key role of IAEA in developing nuclear security regulations and standards. Azerbaijan has developed a successful cooperation with the Agency on various aspects of nuclear security. We are ready to deepen existing fruitful collaboration. Azerbaijan participates in international information sharing on illicit trafficking issues through contribution to the IAEA Incident and Trafficking Database.

Within the IAEA Technical Cooperation Programme, in 2015, the Republic of Azerbaijan and the IAEA signed a Country Programme Framework document for 2015-2020, which establishes a basis for national projects in the area of improvement of the regulatory and legislative infrastructure, capabilities in radiation safety, security of nuclear materials, radioactive waste management, as well as in radiation monitoring and control of border and customs check points.

Azerbaijan also welcomes the efforts of the United Nations for strengthening nuclear security. In this regard, ensuring full implementation of Security Council Resolution 1540 and subsequent resolutions plays an important role in prevention of proliferation of nuclear, chemical and biological weapons, as well as their means of delivery.

Ever since Azerbaijan became a partner country to the Global Initiative to Counter Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), representatives and national experts of the country have been actively participating in GICNT events and thematic exercises. These forums provided an opportunity to share the measures that Azerbaijan has undertaken in fulfilling its international obligations in the area of nuclear safety and security. In addition, we continue bilateral cooperation with our partner countries in the field of combating illicit trafficking, non-proliferation and strengthening the regulatory infrastructure.

Nuclear security is fundamental in the management of nuclear technologies and in applications where nuclear or other radioactive materials can be used or transported. In this regard, necessary efforts are being made in Azerbaijan to strengthen the protection and control of such materials and to respond effectively to nuclear security events. The creation of appropriate regulatory bodies, the improvement and development of legislation and regulations, the introduction of a graded approach to control, as well as participation in various international projects and the development of international cooperation make an invaluable contribution to the development of existing infrastructure.

We continue working on legislation on control over radiation security. Azerbaijan has already adopted normative acts and regulations strictly banning import of nuclear and radiation wastes into the country. With the assistance of the IAEA, the laws and other legislative acts of Azerbaijan concerning registration and control of nuclear and radioactive materials are brought into compliance with international standards.

Azerbaijan has joined the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) and also ratified the Amendment to this Convention.

Excellencies,

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to maintaining and further strengthening nuclear security. Especially, in the face of persistent threat of radical extremism and terrorism in the region and due to our geographic location, we attach the utmost importance to the prevention of use of our territory as a transit route for illicit nuclear trafficking.

In close cooperation with our international partners, we have developed a comprehensive national export control system with a solid legislation basis in line with international standards. However, due to the continued occupation of about twenty percent of our territory by Armenia, we are unable to provide proper control along a substantial part of our borders. This situation offers favorable conditions for illegal activities, including for nuclear smuggling and nuclear terrorism.

In conclusion, I would like to once again stress that Azerbaijan is committed to continue cooperation with international organizations and our partners in strengthening nuclear security in the region and around the world and reducing threats emanating from illicit trafficking in nuclear and radioactive materials and counts on support and cooperation of the IAEA in this matter. Reiterating the importance of this Conference in promoting nuclear security worldwide, Azerbaijan supports the Ministerial Declaration of International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and Strengthening Efforts.

Thank you.