

International Conference on Nuclear Security: Shaping the Future, 20-24 May 2024,
Vienna, Austria

Statement by Denmark

As delivered by Ambassador Christian Grønbech-Jensen, Resident
Representative

Co-Presidents

Let me begin by congratulating you on your role today and thanking you, your representatives, and the IAEA Secretariat for all the work that has gone into this important Conference. While we regret that one state did not join consensus on a Ministerial Declaration, Denmark is aligned with the Co-Presidents' Declaration issued.

Denmark aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union.

Co-Presidents

Since the last ICONS in 2020, our perspective on nuclear security has shifted significantly. Then, we did not imagine that Europe's largest nuclear power plant would be forcibly removed from the control of the legitimate authorities. Russia's illegal war of aggression and seizure of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant has – among so many other deplorable effects – deprived Ukraine of its ability to fully ensure nuclear security.

We welcome the efforts by the IAEA to assist Ukraine in this regard and have been pleased to contribute financially to this work. Denmark also fully supports the Joint Statement on nuclear security in Ukraine. Further, we welcome the Agency's ongoing analysis of the impact of armed conflict on the application of Agency nuclear security guidance, although we deplore the circumstances that have necessitated it.

Co-Presidents

Any incident affecting nuclear security has the potential to have cross-border impact. For this reason, Denmark naturally has a strong interest in promoting nuclear security worldwide although we do not ourselves have nuclear power plants. We regard it as crucial that nuclear and radiological material is covered by the highest level of security whether it is in use, storage or transportation, and thus we ourselves strive to achieve the highest level of security for nuclear and radiological material in use, storage or during transport through Denmark as well as under transport on Danish vessels around the world.

Because of the global nature of nuclear security considerations, bilateral, regional and international cooperation to prevent, detect and respond to threats is crucial. The IAEA provides the central platform for coordination and cooperation. The Agency also has a key role to play in guidance development, advisory services and capacity building for Member States. The new IAEA Nuclear Security Training and Demonstration Centre will

complement existing efforts, and Denmark is pleased to be among the donors to the Centre.

We live in a time of rapid technological change. New technologies bring us many advantages, but also evolving challenges. Our legal and practical frameworks need to evolve, including to address new reactor types. Work through the IAEA to adapt to new technologies and to increase synergies, such as those between nuclear security and nuclear safety considerations, is central to this. With its strong profile in the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear technology, the IAEA is also ideally placed to develop nuclear security and safety as enablers of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, including to attain the Sustainable Development Goals.

For these reasons, Denmark has been a steadfast contributor to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund since 2007. In making our contributions we aim for multi-year, non-earmarked funding to allow the IAEA to make the best possible use of these resources. At the same time, we are concerned by the heavy reliance of the Agency's nuclear security work on voluntary contributions. We do not consider this funding model sustainable and therefore not adequate for such a core Agency task. We call for adequate resources for nuclear security from the regular budget.

Co-Presidents

It is of great importance that the international legal framework for nuclear security is adequate in the face of a likely growing number of nuclear reactors as well as challenges created by factors such as technology change and climate change. We welcome the holding in 2022 of the first Conference of the Parties to the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. It will be important to ensure that the preparations for the next Conference enable a thorough discussion of the dynamic developments in the field and a review of how to address them. This week's impressive scientific and technical programme can contribute to this process.

Co-Presidents

As we face fundamental challenges to international peace and security and to international law, we must seek opportunities to promote rules-based cooperation and global development. Given the role that strong nuclear security can play to foster cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, we are convinced that this Conference, and the IAEA's work on nuclear security more generally, will make a valuable contribution in that regard.

Thank you, Co-Presidents