Mr. Chairman,

Austria fully supports the statement by the European Union in reference to cluster III as well as its working papers. Let me also add a reference to the traditional contribution of the Vienna Group of 10 on the so-called “Vienna issues”, including on the cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy and on nuclear safety, which were presented in a comprehensive, consolidated document this year.

We would like to remind delegations of the principle position of Austria regarding nuclear power, which is certainly well known in expert conferences like this one. It is at this juncture, that we reiterate that the inalienable right under Article IV to develop research, for production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes in conformity with Articles I and II of the NPT also entails the option NOT to use nuclear power.

Nuclear power can never be 100% safe. Past accidents have shown this. Furthermore, given the long-term effects and responsibilities connected to the nuclear fuel cycle, nuclear power is neither a viable option in efforts to promote sustainable development nor to address climate change. To the contrary, it poses an additional risk, given the combination of safety, security and proliferation concerns.

Mr Chairman,

The IAEA is the only international organisation that helps to guarantee that countries choosing to develop their capacities in the peaceful applications of nuclear energy do so under the best safety, security and non-proliferation conditions. Given the respect for the right of each State Party “to develop research, production and use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes”, Austria also follows up to its commitment to facilitate the exercise of this right to the extent possible. Both, through its full national contribution to the Technical Cooperation Fund of the IAEA as well as through the European Union and its various assistance programmes, Austria fulfils its undertaking under article IV paragraph 2 of the NPT as well as under the relevant actions in the 2010 conclusions and recommendations for follow-on action. Austria commends all those countries that are doing the same.

I thank you.