STATEMENT BY

Mr. Jaakko Laajava
Under-Secretary of State for Political Affairs
Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland

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Mr. Chairman,

1. As a member State of the European Union and the Vienna Group of Ten, Finland fully associates itself with the statements of the European Union and the Vienna Group of Ten. 

2. In both of these statements, the balance of rights and responsibilities of all Parties to the Treaty regarding the peaceful use of nuclear energy was emphasized. Since Finland has decided to include nuclear power as a major component in its energy mix, I would like to add a few words from our national perspective and experience.

3. Finland strongly supports the view that all Parties to the Treaty should work and cooperate towards promoting a responsible development and peaceful uses of nuclear energy with a framework ensuring that the related technologies and goods are not disseminated for other than peaceful purposes.

4. Finland has done its home work in this area and will continue to do so. While the public acceptance is a prerequisite for a successful nuclear power programme it requires that there is confidence in nuclear safety and security world wide. Therefore, it is very much in our own interest to be involved in international cooperation, share our expertise and experience and thereby contribute to a positive development in this regard. 

Mr. Chairman,

5. Finland is a small country but very dependent on energy. Nuclear power plants have been in operation since late-1970s. The safety record is good and the performance indicators have been excellent. At present, Finland’s fifth nuclear power plant unit, 1600 megawatt EPR unit, is under construction in Olkiluoto. It should be operative in three years. At that time, the share of nuclear power in the electricity consumption will increase to around 40 per cent, which makes us a fairly big user of nuclear power, in relative terms.

6. Furthermore, three individual companies - both existing operators of NPPs - Fortum and TVO - as well as newcomer Fennovoima - have filed applications for construction of additional nuclear power plant units. On 6 May 2010, the Finnish Government made two decisions-in-principle in favour of additional construction of nuclear power. TVO’s application for constructing a new nuclear power plant unit in Olkiluoto, the site where TVO has the other NPP units, and Fennovoima’s application for constructing a new nuclear power plant in Northern Finland were both approved. However, the Government did not approve Fortum’s application for constructing a new nuclear power plant unit, so-called Loviisa 3.

7. In the same context, the Government made also a decision-in-principle in favour of an application filed by a specialized company named Posiva for constructing an extended final disposal repository for spent nuclear fuel generated in Finland. This extension will ensure the management of spent nuclear fuel from all TVO’s NPPs.

8. Through these decisions Finland will make a dramatic shift towards carbon emission free energy production, while ensuring the nation’s self-sufficiency in electricity production for the first time in several decades.

9. The entry into force of each favourable decision-in-principle is subject to separate approval by the Finnish Parliament. If the Parliament decides to approve them, they will remain in force for five years thereafter but will cease to remain in force if the company in question does not submit an application for a construction licence, in accordance with the Nuclear Energy Act. The Government will deal with the potential construction licence applications separately, in due course.
Mr. Chairman,

10. Nuclear waste management is an issue that should be considered from the very beginning if a nation wants to build nuclear power. A strategy on how to plan the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel and nuclear waste, and how to implement it, is necessary. At the same time, the questions related to the financing of nuclear waste management and of decommissioning of old power plants have to be properly dealt with.

11. In Finland, the Government adopted the policy on spent nuclear fuel management already in 1983. Of course, plans have advanced after that, but the main decision is still valid, meaning that the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel will start in Finland by 2020. All waste management and decommissioning costs will be covered by the nuclear power companies, not by the Government. A specific nuclear waste management fund was established by the Government to gradually collect the required funds in advance from the power companies.

12. The construction of the final disposal facility is in progress at Olkiluoto NPP site. Since this kind of facility is new and unique in the nuclear power industry, the IAEA had to develop a specific safeguards approach for the final disposal of spent nuclear fuel. This work was carried out over the past several years when developing the State level Integrated Safeguards Approach for Finland, which is now being implemented in full scale.

13. The new Integrated Safeguards Approach allowed the Agency to make optimum use of all information available to it. Also the Finnish experiences from implementing the State level Safeguards Approach have been very positive in terms of increased effectiveness and efficiency. For example, the number of IAEA field inspections in Finland decreased by 60% in 2009 and, at the same time, the quality of the safeguards conclusion by the IAEA increased, thanks to the possibilities of the new approach.

Mr. Chairman,

14. In conclusion, Finland is building new nuclear power as a major component of her energy mix which also emphasizes very strongly the component of renewable energy, such as wind and bioenergy. At the same time we strongly support international co-operation in this area in order to increase confidence in nuclear safety and security world wide.

15. Finland is party to all relevant international instruments and informal arrangements regarding nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation. Finland also actively participates in the development of international standards and guidelines in this field, mainly in the framework of the IAEA.

16. Finland has made full use of the IAEA advisory services, and several safety peer review missions, like OSART and IRRS, have been conducted in Finland. The most recent mission was the International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission conducted in 2009. An additional OSART mission and an IRRS- mission are to be conducted in the near future. We are very pleased with these missions and we strongly encourage other States to make use of these very useful IAEA services.

Thank you Mr. Chairman.