2015 Review Conference of the Parties
to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT)
Main Committee III

Statement by
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Mr. Chairperson,

Let me first of all join others in congratulating you for assuming the important task as the Chair of the Main Committee III. Your leadership and experience will be valuable to our work and I wish to assure you of the full cooperation of my delegation.

I associate myself fully with the statement made by the European Union in the beginning of this Committee and would like to make the following additional national remarks.

Our priorities are also reflected in working papers prepared by the Vienna Group of 10 and presented by Australia yesterday. The Group has prepared a comprehensive paper, which has been circulated as conference working paper 1 on the so-called ‘Vienna Issues’. With the aim of facilitating consensus, it includes specific proposals also in the areas falling under this Main Committee. Delegations may also find useful the brief background notes accompanying these recommendations.

Mr. Chairperson,

Finland strongly supports the view that all Parties to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty should work towards promoting a responsible development and safe and peaceful uses of nuclear energy. At the same time it needs to be ensured that the related technologies and goods are not disseminated for other than peaceful purposes. In this regard there is a balance of rights and responsibilities of all Parties to the Treaty.

Nuclear applications can play an essential role in areas such as human health, water management, agriculture, food safety and nutrition, energy and environmental protection. They have also made a considerable contribution to achieving the Millennium Development Goals.

We commend the role of the IAEA and its Technical Cooperation Program in this regard and encourage the IAEA to continue its efforts as a part of the wider UN family. We also welcome the extension of the IAEA Peaceful Uses Initiative.

Nuclear power plays an important role in the global energy mix. This was stated also by the IAEA Director General Amano in his statement to the Review Conference.

This is also the case in Finland. With almost 30 percent share, nuclear power is the biggest single source of energy in Finnish electricity production and that share is expected to increase further. Nuclear power plants have been in operation since the late-1970s. Our safety record of is good and the performance indicators have been excellent.
Nuclear waste management is an issue that should come first, rather than last. A strategy on how to safely and securely dispose of spent nuclear fuel and nuclear and other radioactive waste is necessary from the very beginning when starting to develop a nuclear power program.

Finland is among the forerunners in the development of final disposal of spent nuclear fuel and high level radioactive waste.

Finland is currently licensing a final underground repository for spent fuel, called “Onkalo”. It will meet strict and appropriate safety, security and safeguards requirements and make use of advanced technology. Large part of the new technology has been developed in Finland.

Mr. Chairperson,

Nuclear safety has always been a priority for Finland and we consistently support the IAEA activities in this field. It is clear that the main development since the last Review Conference has been due to the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in 2011.”?

A lot has been done to strengthen nuclear safety. Governments and international organizations must continue to take active steps to enhance safety measures for all fuel cycle activities. The IAEA and Member States should continue to ensure that nuclear safety is continuously improved also in other areas that are not highlighted in the lessons learned from the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

It is essential that countries using nuclear power, or embarking upon it, have sound legislative and regulatory framework on nuclear and radiation safety. The regulatory bodies need to be given required authority and independence in their decision making - as well as resources to fulfil their tasks. The regulatory authority must also enjoy the trust of the citizens.

Finland has made full use of safety related IAEA advisory services and peer review missions. We are very pleased with these missions and we strongly encourage other states to make full use of these IAEA services.

Mr. Chairperson,

The security of nuclear materials and facilities is also given a high priority in my country. National nuclear security systems will not reach their full potential without cooperation on international level.
We should continue to strengthen our common normative basis through the two existing international legal instruments. Finland promotes further ratification of the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and bringing into force the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Finland has ratified the Amendment and encourages all States parties to do so.

I wish to stress that effective physical protection of all nuclear and other radioactive materials should also include materials used in nuclear weapons.

My government continues to provide financial and in-kind support to the IAEA’s Nuclear Security activities. In addition to the collective EU contribution, Finland has since 2010 contributed to the Nuclear Security Fund.

We should all make better use of the IAEA peer reviews of national nuclear security systems (IPPAS) and of existing nuclear security guidance, as well as commit to follow-up the findings of the missions.

We consider important that the dangers related to nuclear terrorism have received increasing attention in the work of the IAEA and a number of activities are devoted to this subject.

One of such initiatives is the Nuclear Security Summit series. Threat of nuclear terrorism and the need to address it through international cooperation has been in the focus of the Nuclear Security Summit series from the very beginning.

Finland also takes part in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and has agreed to host its plenary meeting in Helsinki next month. Our own national experience shows that sharing best practices and participating in exercises in the GICNT framework is useful and in our interest. Currently 85 Partner Nations are involved in the GICNT cooperation. We very warmly welcome to Helsinki also those States who have not yet joined the Initiative. The Finnish Government is ready to work closely with all of you to make the GICNT meeting a productive one.

I thank you Mr. Chairperson.