The right of all Parties to the Treaty to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes is one of the cornerstones of the NPT. However, the peaceful use of nuclear energy goes hand in hand with the responsibility for nuclear safety. The final document of the 2010 Review Conference was agreed before the Fukushima accident happened. Today we are in a different situation. The Fukushima accident has reminded us that a nuclear accident does not respect national borders and its effects may have a global impact.

This is why Switzerland has taken the initiative to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety, the CNS. The Swiss proposal was intended to strengthen the CNS by requesting that nuclear power plants shall be designed and constructed with the objectives of preventing accidents and, should an accident occur, mitigating its effects, including long term off-site contaminations. The proposal also extended this requirement to existing nuclear power plants.

At the Diplomatic Conference of the Contracting Parties of the CNS held on 9 February of this year the Vienna Declaration was adopted. This political document contains important elements of the Swiss proposal to strengthen nuclear safety of new and existing nuclear power plants. In addition, it improves the reporting process in the framework of the CNS. Beside the document itself, the process as such that lead the Contracting Parties to the adoption by consensus of the Vienna Declaration was of great importance and has strengthened the common understanding of nuclear safety.

More than four years after the Fukushima accident we cannot simply go back to business as usual. The Diplomatic Conference of the CNS nevertheless demonstrated the extent to which political awareness of the issue of nuclear safety still needs to be heightened internationally. Despite a number
of major accidents, we have not seen the same international engagement in the area of nuclear safety as we have seen in other areas, for instance the area of nuclear security, in which significant initiatives have been taken. Switzerland believes that the discussion of the final report on Fukushima by the IAEA due to begin next June in the Board of Governors should provide the opportunity for setting out future ways of strengthening international engagement in favor of nuclear safety.

In addition, adherence of all States which have not yet done so to the existing instruments governing nuclear safety, including the CNS, and to implement the key points of the 2011 IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety, especially the ones related to the peer-review missions and the transparency requested from the national regulatory authorities, are of utmost importance.

The Final Document of this Review Conference should reflect the strong commitment of all States Party to the NPT for nuclear safety as a fundamental condition for a responsible use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.