
Main Committee II: Nuclear Security

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Statement by H.E. Rolf Stalder
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The peaceful use of nuclear energy goes hand in hand with States’ responsibility for nuclear security. As an act of nuclear terrorism could have repercussions far exceeding the borders of any particular State, strengthening nuclear security should also be a matter of global concern. Although we recognize that nuclear security is a State responsibility, Switzerland is of the opinion that efforts at the multilateral level should be reinforced. Switzerland is therefore calling on States which have not yet done so to adhere to the instruments constituting the cornerstone of the multilateral architecture of nuclear security, so as to ensure their universality as soon as possible. These essential instruments are the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 amendment, the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources.

Switzerland is also of the opinion that we must anticipate new challenges, including cyber-attacks, and more globally those related to the issue of attacks on nuclear installations, as well as nuclear materials in use for industrial and medical purposes.

Switzerland has played an active part in the work of the various Nuclear Security Summits. As the 2016 Summit may well conclude a series begun in 2010, it is important that a platform is retained to continue the substantial work done so far. Given its expertise and almost universal composition, the IAEA is the most suitable forum for a task of this kind, and for coordinating the other efforts being made in this area. In this context, Switzerland encourages the States Parties to use the opportunity of the Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security, which the IAEA will be organising in December 2016, to define the future role of the Agency in this area.
Switzerland would like to stress that, at this stage, the multilateral architecture for nuclear security is incomplete as long as it concentrates its efforts mainly on the materials related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy. 85% of all nuclear materials are under military control. This vast amount of sensitive nuclear material remains outside the safeguard system and international control. However, in order to be credible, an international nuclear security regime must cover all existing nuclear materials, including those under military control. In addition, it also should extend to all States capable of producing nuclear materials. A regime of this kind must possess mechanisms similar to the peer-review missions performed in the field of nuclear safety. Switzerland points out that the various Nuclear Security Summits, as well as the 2013 IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security, acknowledged the importance of securing all nuclear materials, including those used for military purposes. Switzerland will continue to be active in this area, with other countries, in the run-up to the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit.