



STATEMENT OF THE GROUP OF 77 AND CHINA DURING THE INFORMAL CONSULTATIONS REGARDING THE IAEA NUCLEAR SECURITY PLAN 2018-2021, ON 24 FEBRUARY 2017, DELIVERED BY H.E. AMBASSADOR REZA NAJAFI, PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

Vienna, 24 February 2017

Mr. DDG,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to thank the Secretariat for preparing the Draft Nuclear Security Plan 2018-2021. The Group also expresses its gratitude to Deputy Director General Juan Carlos Lentijo for his introductory remarks at today's meeting.
2. At the outset, the Group would like to refer to the fact that the Draft Report was released only a few days ago. In light of the complexity and importance of the subject before us, the G-77 and China is of the view that this meeting would be more productive had the document been released well in advance of the start of consultations. This would have allowed Member States more time to analyze the details in the text and their implications. In this context, the Group would like to present its preliminary comments on the Draft.
3. The Group takes note of the Agency's activities in the area of nuclear security and its continued efforts to support Member States, upon their request, to establish and improve their nuclear security capacity. The Group notes that the Agency's first comprehensive plan of action was approved in March 2002 by the Board of Governors, together with the creation of a voluntary funding mechanism, the Nuclear Security Fund, in order to implement the Plan. The Group highlights the need to ensure an appropriate balance between activities in the promotional and non-promotional areas. In this regard, the Group requests further information on the implications of Section E of the Draft Plan, on Programme Management and Resources.
4. The Group reiterates the notion that the role of the Agency in enhancing nuclear security and the scope of its activities must be determined by Member States, as reflected in the Board decisions and General Conference resolutions.
5. The Group underscores that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State. The Group notes that this important principle has been only partially and not fully mentioned in paragraph 3 of the Draft Plan. In paragraph 6, the principle is combined with an assertion of a different nature. While the Group concurs with the value of voluntary cooperation in this area, it believes that the recognition thereof should be expressed in a separate sentence.
6. The Group notes that the Draft Plan refers to the emergence of additional areas and the evolution of existing areas and changes in the global security situation. The Group highlights the need to have a thorough discussion on the elements mentioned in paragraph 9, pages 3 and 4 of the Draft Plan.
7. The Group reiterates its principled position that nuclear security considerations should not hamper international cooperation in the field of peaceful nuclear activities, the production, transfer and use of nuclear and other radioactive material, the exchange of nuclear material for peaceful purposes and the promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and should not undermine the established priorities of the Agency's technical cooperation programme. This important principle has been stated in the resolutions on nuclear security adopted by the General Conference and reflected in the two Ministerial Declarations, adopted in 2013 and last December.

8. In this regard, the Group notes with concern the use of language in paragraphs 2, 3 and 6 of the Draft Plan of Action which may be interpreted as the recognition or establishment of a conditionality for the exercise of the right to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. Paragraph 2 mentions that “a sustained focus on nuclear security” would be required “to enable the continued use of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy”. Paragraph 3 states that “appropriate and effective national systems for nuclear security are vital in facilitating the peaceful use of nuclear energy”. Paragraph 6 asserts that “Nuclear security should be considered an indispensable component of, rather than an impediment to, the development of peaceful nuclear applications”.

9. The Group remains of the view that the exercise of this right is governed exclusively by the relevant commitments undertaken by States and requests that the above-mentioned parts of the Draft be deleted or redrafted in order to bring them in line with the language of the General Conference resolutions and Ministerial Declarations.

10. Similarly, the Group notes that paragraph 8 of the Draft Nuclear Security Plan states that “new and rapidly developing technologies are posing challenges to which national nuclear security regimes must respond”. Paragraph 9 bullet 8 mentions “the identification of alternative technologies where economically viable”. The Group would like to request further information from the Secretariat on these parts of the Draft Plan.

11. With these preliminary comments, the G-77 and China expresses its readiness to engage in further consultations on the Draft Nuclear Security Plan 2018-2021 with a view to its finalization in due course.

Thank you, Mr. DDG.