



Statement of the Group of 77 and China at the Informal Consultation Meeting on the Draft Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025 on 29 June 2021, delivered by Mr. Gustavo Sancho Viquez, Permanent Mission of Costa Rica

Madam Chairperson,

1. The Group of 77 and China wishes to raise a few points regarding the current process related to the Nuclear Security Plan (NSP) for 2022-2025. The Group reaffirms its statement delivered under the “Any Other Business” agenda item during the June Board meeting, as well as its principled positions stated therein, and wishes to only emphasize in this statement a few procedural points.
2. The Group recalls the General Conference Resolution on Nuclear Security adopted in 2020 (GC(64)/RES/10), which called upon the Secretariat to develop the Nuclear Security Plan 2022-2025 in close consultation with Member States. In this regard, the Group underscores the need for as many consultations as required until consensus is reached.
3. The Group appreciates the efforts made by the Secretariat in preparing the draft with track changes and for convening informal consultations with a view to reaching consensus among Member States, while recognizing the difficult situation caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the constraints imposed on us and the process.
4. The Group is concerned that Member States may not have enough time to hold in-depth and robust consultations on the proposals that will set the tone for the next four years in this important area of the IAEA’s work, as contained in the draft NSP.
5. According to the Programme of Work presented to Member States on 12 March 2021 and again at the consultations in April, the second draft of the proposed NSP should have been received towards the end of April and the next round of informal consultations were due to take place towards the end of May. It is, however, unfortunate that this plan has not materialized as initially planned.
6. Bearing in mind that the responsibility for nuclear security within a State rests entirely with that State, and that the purpose of the NSP is to provide a framework within which assistance to Member States is provided by the IAEA, as requested. It is of paramount importance that the main focus in the consultation process should be on establishing a final consensual understanding in relations with the substance of the NSP amongst Member States.
7. The Group reaffirms its previous position that the language in all sections of the NSP must reflect the consensus among the Member States contained in the GC Nuclear Security Resolutions and as appropriate the 2020 ICONS Ministerial Declaration on Nuclear Security.
8. Therefore, the Group firmly believes that procedural issues including artificial tight-scheduling and/or restrictions on having a proper and exhaustive consultation process should not create unnecessary impediments for satisfying such an important objective, as stated by various Member States during the most recent consultations held on 25 June 2021. In this regard, the Group underscores the need for as many consultations as required until consensus is reached.
9. It is pertinent here to underscore that while the general rule calls for the IAEA reports to be issued within enough time before the Board’s meetings, certain exceptions can be accepted if the need arises especially from negotiated documents that require Member States’ approval.
10. Accordingly, the Group believes that there is an urgent need to agree on a revised program of work for consultations on the draft NSP, and to abide by it. The Group requests that in this revised work plan no procedural issue should prevent us from achieving consensus on the NSP by the September Board of Governors meeting.

I thank you, Madam Buglova.