

National Statement: Switzerland
April 01, 2016

Nuclear Security Summit 2016

Statement by H.E. Johann N. Schneider-Ammann

President of the Swiss Confederation

Mr. President,

Thank you for your initiative and leadership to bring us all together to strengthen nuclear security.

We all agree: nuclear terrorism remains a serious threat for our planet. Any nuclear terrorist attack would have catastrophic humanitarian consequences.

The Nuclear Security Summits have made a valuable contribution to awareness-raising and creating political momentum for action. Much has been achieved at the national and international level since 2010.

We need to acknowledge that nuclear security is part of a larger context. In Switzerland's view, there is an obvious link between nuclear security and nuclear disarmament.

We therefore call for further progress on nuclear disarmament and for the start of negotiations on a treaty covering fissile material used for nuclear weapons.

We also need to be ready to meet new challenges that have a potential impact on nuclear security. Let me mention, as many colleagues already have done, the threats stemming from cyber-attacks.

Mr. President,

Switzerland is strongly committed to strengthening nuclear security as a responsible and constructive actor in international security policy.

I am pleased to announce that Switzerland has removed over 2 kilograms of highly-enriched uranium and approximately 20 kilograms of plutonium in the framework of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative. This is a concrete contribution to enhanced global nuclear security.

My country was among the early ones to ratify the relevant legal instruments, even before the Summit process started.

We have also adapted our nuclear security legislation in the last years to reflect our international commitments and incorporate best practices as recommended by the IAEA. We are fully committed to maintaining the highest standards and implementing the best practices possible regarding nuclear security.

Mr. President,

Our international action should focus on the following three areas:

We should strengthen adherence to the international legal instruments and aim for their universality. With ratification completed by 102 States, the entry into force of the Amendment to the CPPNM (Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material) is now imminent. This is a major achievement of the Summit process.

We should also encourage further States to ratify the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism. We should work towards the universal application of the IAEA Code of Conduct (on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources). And we should use the comprehensive review of UN Security Council resolution 1540 this year to take stock of its implementation and reinforce it further.

Second, we need to strengthen the leading and central role of the IAEA. With its 168 Member States, the Agency is well-placed to become the future hub of our activities. Nuclear security is an enduring responsibility. Our efforts have to continue after the Summit process ends. We welcome the convening of a Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security by the Agency later this year, which will bring together both technical expertise and political leadership.

Thirdly, we need to broaden the agenda. If we want to build a truly comprehensive and effective global nuclear security regime, we also need to include nuclear material used for military purposes.

Voluntary transparency and assurance measures by the states possessing military material would help build confidence that international standards for effective nuclear security apply to all nuclear material. And all nuclear material that is no longer used for military purposes should be placed under the safeguards regime of the International Atomic Energy Agency.