



NEW ZEALAND

Statement by

H.E. Nicole Robertson
Permanent Representative, Vienna

at the

2017 Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to
the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

Cluster III

Vienna, May 2017

Mr Chair

Like other NPT states, New Zealand contributes to and benefits from advances in nuclear science in a number of areas including agriculture, human health and environmental management. It is New Zealand's view that the IAEA's Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI) has a key role to play and we have been pleased to support a number of projects through the PUI, such as monitoring radioactivity in the marine environment from the Fukushima accident and responding to sustained drought in the Sahel region. We also play an active part in projects under the auspices of the IAEA Regional Collective Agreement in the Asia-Pacific region.

While we have decided not to include nuclear power in our own energy mix, we nevertheless recognise the right of State Parties to the NPT to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes under Article IV of the Treaty. Here I would like to underscore that New Zealand is equally firm in its view that all countries developing and using nuclear technology must apply the highest standards of safeguards, safety and security, including during transport and waste management. In March 2017, New Zealand's new Radiation Safety Act entered into force, enabling us to more effectively meet our own international obligations relating to radiation protection, safety, security and nuclear non-proliferation.

Mr Chair

It is now six years since the tragic accident at the Fukushima Nuclear Power Plant. For New Zealand, and many of our regional neighbours, the accident reinforced the importance of continued vigilance and transparency on nuclear safety issues. It also clearly demonstrated that nuclear accidents do not respect national boundaries. This would be particularly true for an accident occurring during the maritime transport of nuclear material.

New Zealand continues to actively promote the safe transport of radioactive material, at the IAEA and other relevant forums. We are strongly of the view, Mr Chair, that it is essential that those transporting radioactive material adopt and apply the highest possible safety standards, and that coastal and other interested States receive notification in advance of shipments. New Zealand was pleased to join a number of coastal and shipping states at the IAEA in

agreeing voluntary best practice guidelines on communication to apply to certain shipments of radioactive material. We look forward to participating in a second table-top exercise to test these guidelines, to take place in Lisbon next month. We also welcome efforts to improve the international nuclear liability regime and will continue to work with others to ensure the concerns of non-nuclear coastal states are taken into account.

Mr Chair

New Zealand remains committed to strengthening nuclear security. The potential humanitarian, economic and environmental consequences of terrorists gaining access to nuclear or radioactive materials are so grave, that the New Zealand Government is doing all within its power to minimise the possibility of this nightmare becoming a reality. In our view, the Agency's work on nuclear security is indispensable, including for states like New Zealand with small quantities of nuclear and radioactive material. We commend the IAEA's IPPAS missions as a valuable tool to provide helpful and pragmatic assistance for securing nuclear and radioactive material. We call on all states to maintain at all times effective security of all nuclear and other radioactive material, including the 85% of material used for non-civilian purposes.

Mr Chair

In closing, New Zealand recalls the Vienna Group of Ten statement and working paper and commends the Group's set of recommendations for your attention when addressing the 'Vienna issues.'

Thank you Mr Chair.

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