



European Union

**EURATOM Statement on
Agenda item 9: National Statements**

**2022 Conference of the Parties to the Amendment to the
Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (A/CPPNM)**

Vienna, 28 March – 1 April 2022

Dear co-Presidents,

On behalf of Euratom, I would like to congratulate you on your election as co-Presidents of the review conference of the amended Convention on the physical protection of nuclear material.

Excellencies,

Euratom aligns itself with the EU statement concerning the Russian aggression against Ukraine. We are extremely concerned over the nuclear safety, security and safeguards situation in Ukraine caused by Russia's invasion, which we condemn in the strongest terms. The war significantly increases the risk of a nuclear accident or incident. This is very worrying in light of our collective commitments to strengthen the international nuclear safety and security infrastructure and ensure universal implementation of the nuclear safety and security conventions such as the A/CPPNM.

Euratom has been a Party to the Convention since 1991 and to the amended Convention since 2016. All EU Member States are parties to the amended Convention.

In order to contribute to the review of the implementation of the Convention, Euratom is pleased to share an overview of its activities in the area.

Euratom, as well as all of its Member States, have fulfilled their obligation under Article 14.1 of the Convention to inform the depositary of their laws and regulations giving effect to the Convention. We attach great importance to this obligation as - in the absence of a reporting mechanism - this information provides a useful indication of the status of implementation of the Convention by all Contracting Parties.

Euratom has adhered to the Convention as a regional organisation. While the responsibility for ensuring the implementation of the physical protection measures laid down in the Convention lies solely with Euratom's Member States, Euratom possesses powers in the areas of nuclear safeguards, supply of nuclear

materials, nuclear safety, radiation protection, radioactive waste management, and emergency preparedness and response. Euratom, within the limits of its powers, has established a coherent legal framework in these areas, comprising appropriate interfaces with physical protection.

The application of the highest level of physical protection in all countries is of the utmost importance. Euratom has therefore ensured that all nuclear cooperation agreements with third countries reference the Convention and its provisions. We wish to see that the Review Conference assists the global community in assuring the levels of physical protection in operating nuclear facilities or in transporting nuclear material meet the requirements of the Convention.

With regard to international cooperation, non-EU countries may also participate in the European Community Urgent Radiological Information Exchange (ECURIE) system operated by the Commission. Currently 31 countries take part in this 24/7 rapid alert and information exchange system for radiological emergencies, which could also potentially result from malicious acts, in addition to accidents. The WebECURIE system interfaces with IAEA's United System for Information Exchange, which was established under the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident.

Physical protection plays an important role in supporting nuclear non-proliferation. In this context, Euratom operates a regional system of accountancy and control of nuclear materials for the whole European Union, which has common goals with and is an important element in supporting the physical protection of nuclear materials.

We believe that the threats which led to the adoption of the original Convention and later its amendment are evolving and require continuous monitoring to assess their potential effects in terms of physical protection.

Euratom is following closely the potential security challenges from emerging nuclear technologies, including small modular reactors and deep geological repositories. Euratom fully supports efforts to consider security aspects at an early stage in the development of new technologies.

Euratom, through its Joint Research Centre, co-chairs the Proliferation Resistance and Physical Protection working group of the Generation IV International Forum (GIF). This group developed, inter alia, a methodology to evaluate the physical protection features of nuclear energy systems. The group is also preparing, together with the GIF System Steering Committees, updated White Papers on the proliferation resistance and physical protection of the six GIF reactor technologies.

Moreover, in nuclear security, the Joint Research Centre complements the activities of the EU Member States, addressing various aspects of CBRN security

both inside and outside the European Union. For example: the European Nuclear Security Training Centre delivers training on detection and response to nuclear security incidents, as well as on the forensic analysis of nuclear materials.

Euratom reiterates its commitment to the amended Convention, which creates an adequate framework provided its application becomes universal and all Parties fully embrace its provisions. We therefore call on the IAEA Secretariat and the Parties to continue promoting the universalisation of the Convention and ensuring both the national legal framework and the resources necessary to adhere to all the principles of this Convention.

We believe that further progress can be made to build confidence of the other Parties and the public on the physical protection of nuclear material. We, therefore, invite the Parties to use this conference as an opportunity to discuss ways to increase the visibility of the implementation of the Convention.

Finally, we consider that review conferences provide an effective opportunity to review and promote the implementation of the Convention and we therefore join the request that the Depositary convene the next conference of States Parties no later than six years after the first Review Conference.

Thank you.