

STATEMENT

H.E. Milko Berner, Deputy Minister of Interior of the Republic of Bulgaria

**at the International Conference on Nuclear Security: Sustaining and
Strengthening Efforts**

10–14 February 2020, Vienna, Austria

Excellencies,
Dear Colleagues,

I would like to express my sincere congratulations to the Secretariat for organizing the Conference. I firmly believe that the views and opinions exchanged during the week will lead the Conference to a successful outcome and will contribute to enhancing the IAEA's work in this field.

The Republic of Bulgaria aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union and reaffirms the basic principle that responsibility for nuclear security rests with each individual state. As we continue to attach great importance to the IAEA's core mandate in the fields of non-proliferation, nuclear energy, nuclear safety, nuclear security and technical cooperation, we underline that bilateral, regional and international cooperation is crucial for strengthening nuclear security.

In this regard, we encourage the Secretariat's efforts to ensure cross-functional cooperation in all IAEA activities and we will continue to strongly support the IAEA in improving globally the nuclear security framework by strengthening international cooperation, offering advisory services and providing direct assistance to Member States.

We welcome the work of the Agency in establishing the (global) Security Standards, providing for their application and assisting Member States in meeting their obligations under the international binding and non-binding instruments.

Sufficient numbers of competent and motivated personnel are one of the important prerequisites to establish and sustain States' nuclear security regimes. We would like to reaffirm our longstanding and strong support for the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Programme, including through the TC Fund and other supplementary mechanisms such as the Peaceful Uses Initiative. We pay utmost importance to the capacity building in nuclear security and undertake actions to promote activities in this area, including by establishing and maintaining specific educational program on nuclear security in the University for National and World Economy in Sofia.

We continue to support and we are actively involved into the work of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) in all areas: nuclear detection, nuclear forensics, response, and mitigation. In this regard, we would host a detection exercise in Sofia in the spring of 2020. In this way, we once again reiterate our commitment to the Initiative and

its mission to strengthen global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear terrorism.

Bulgaria is a state party to the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and actively participates in the preparation of the 2021 Conference of the Parties to the Amended Convention. We strongly support all efforts to promote its universalization and effective implementation.

Excellencies,

The Republic of Bulgaria looks forward to a successful Conference and would like to assure the Secretariat in its full support.

I thank you for your attention.