

EUROPEAN EXTERNAL ACTION SERVICE



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INFORMATION **on the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit** **for the European Parliament Subcommittee on Security and Defence** **(Brussels, 21 April 2016)**

Madame Chairperson, Distinguished Members of the European Parliament,

Thank you for the invitation to brief on the fourth Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) which took place in Washington on 31 March – 1 April 2016 hosted by the United States. The whole **NSS process** stems from a speech by President Obama delivered in Prague in April 2009 on nuclear issues. Most famously, he spoke there about his vision of a world without nuclear weapons. But in Prague he also announced "a new international effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within four years". So the main purpose of this initiative has been to prevent terrorists from using nuclear materials. The effort proved more challenging than originally envisioned and took many years, it is actually work in progress. Previous NS Summits were held in Washington (2010), Seoul (2012) and The Hague (2014).

The EU was among the four international **organizations** invited to attend the 2016 NSS, along with the UN (represented by UNSG Ban Ki-moon), the International Atomic Energy Agency (DG Amano), and Interpol (SG Stock). President Tusk headed the Delegation of the European Council, while HR/VP Mogherini headed the Delegation of the European Commission representing President Juncker.

Over 50 **States** from around the World, including 15 EU Member States, were invited by the US. The Delegates, including over 35 Heads of State and Government, discussed a broad range of issues related to the risks of nuclear and other forms of terrorism as well as means of dealing with them.

The **programme** of the two-day Summit consisted of a working dinner at the White House, a plenary on *National Actions to Enhance Nuclear Security*, a working lunch on *International and Institutional Actions to Strengthen Nuclear Security*, and a *Scenario-Based Policy Discussion* on a hypothetical terrorist plot. In parallel, there were also a Nuclear Industry Summit and an Experts' Summit for think-tanks, NGOs and the civil society. A number of strains could be distinguished throughout the two-day **discussions**.

President Obama was widely praised for his 2009 initiative which highlighted the threat of nuclear or radiological terrorism and raised the importance of **nuclear security** to political level in national and international agendas. States provided national progress reports on their achievements in nuclear security and in particular in minimizing the usage of highly enriched

uranium (HEU) in civilian facilities and in strengthening the protection of nuclear facilities and materials. The EU's equivalent presented at the Summit was the Joint Staff Working Document SWD(2016)98 *EU efforts to strengthen nuclear security* (copies available).

The imminent entry into force of the 2005 **Amendment** to the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and Facilities (CPPNM) was announced at the Summit. This is an important achievement. The original Convention applied only to nuclear material in international transit. The Amendment greatly increases the legal protection to cover all nuclear material also in domestic transport, civilian usage and in storage, as well as nuclear facilities. We can be proud that all EU MS, as well as Euratom have ratified the Amendment. In addition, in accordance with our policy of promoting the universalization and effective implementation of international treaties and agreements, the EEAS has conducted diplomatic outreach in support of its entry into force. So the European Union has made a major contribution to the CPPNM Amendment's imminent entry into force on 8 May 2016.

During Summit's discussions, the **terrorist threat** in general was assessed as growing, as exemplified by recent attacks in Belgium, Turkey, Pakistan and elsewhere. Of particular concern is the growing sophistication in the usage of social media, communication technologies, and potentially also dispersion tools (drones). Against this backdrop, there was a clear consensus that closer cooperation among intelligence agencies is needed.

With regard to **nuclear proliferation**, there was widespread criticism of North Korea's dangerous and provocative behaviour, and of Russia's increased reliance on nuclear weapons and their modernization (*nota bene*, the Russian Federation pulled out of the NSS process in 2014). There was broad recognition of the importance of the agreement reached with Iran (JCPOA) in which the EU has played a key role.

Nuclear safety concerns were also raised, related either to old nuclear power plants allegedly creating risks of accidents for neighbours, or new projects developed without required transparency. This applies also to EU's neighbourhood. **Nuclear disarmament** was also mentioned by many as an important element of President Obama's Prague Agenda.

The formal **outcome** of the 2016 NSS includes the Summit Communique and five Action Plans in support of relevant work at the UN, the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), INTERPOL, the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and the Global Partnership (GP) against the Spread of Weapons of Mass Destruction. They are available on the Summit's official website www.nss2016.org.

The key role of the International Atomic Energy Agency (**IAEA**) in the field of nuclear security cooperation was broadly acknowledged and the Agency will be largely responsible for taking the NSS work forward in the future, including at an International Conference on Nuclear Security to be organized by the IAEA in Vienna on 5-9 December 2016. A number of countries, including the Summit host - US, signalled their intention to attend the IAEA Conference at ministerial level.

The US has also put on the table a proposal for an informal "**contact group**" to meet in Vienna at least once a year, probably in the margins of the IAEA General Conference. This informal group would be open to all interested States.

In addition, the Summit provided an opportunity for a number of other meetings and **bilateral** diplomatic contacts by both President Tusk and HR/VP Mogherini.

Thank you for your attention, I am at your disposal in case of further questions.