

PUBLIC STATEMENT
PLENARY MEETING OF THE NUCLEAR SUPPLIERS GROUP
Brussels, Belgium, 24-25 June 2021

The thirtieth Plenary Meeting of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), chaired by H.E. Mr. Werner Bauwens, Special Envoy, Kingdom of Belgium, was held in Brussels, Belgium, on 24 and 25 June 2021. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the 2020 NSG Plenary meeting, which had been initially planned for June 2020, had not taken place. Participating Governments, welcoming the smooth transition that allowed for continuity in the work of the NSG, agreed to follow in future the new timing of the Plenary taking place at the end of a Chair's term in office.

The NSG brings together 48 Participating Governments¹ with the European Commission and the Chair of the Zangger Committee participating as permanent observers. The Group aims to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons through the implementation, on a national basis, of export controls for nuclear and nuclear-related dual-use equipment, materials, software, and related technology, without hindering international cooperation on the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In her welcoming address to the Plenary, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium, H.E. Ms. Sophie Wilmès, called the Nuclear Suppliers Group a powerful ingredient of the global non-proliferation architecture. She hoped that the 30th Plenary would send an inspiring signal of constructive multilateral engagement in view of the upcoming review conference of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. The Minister called for international resolve to respond to the issue of the DPRK through full implementation of all UNSC resolutions and sustained scrutiny of exports. She expressed concern over actions undertaken by Iran that do not comply with its obligations under the JCPOA and asked the Group to remain vigilant. She underscored the determination of the Belgian chairmanship to reinforce the coherence, continuity and vitality of the NSG despite the challenging working conditions due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The NSG took stock of developments since the last meeting in Nur-Sultan in 2019 and expressed its appreciation to Kazakhstan, for guiding the Group as a sign of its commitment to export controls, and for working with the other members of the Troika until the formal handover to Belgium on 25 June 2020.

Participating Governments underscored their strong resolve to protect continuity and enhance the vitality of the NSG by continuing deep cooperation, even under the restricted working conditions imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

In particular, Participating Governments exchanged information on global proliferation challenges. They reiterated their firm support for the full, complete and effective implementation of the NPT as the cornerstone of the international non-proliferation architecture. They underscored the importance of effective export controls and looked forward to promoting their agreed updated guidelines and understandings as a concrete contribution to the rescheduled NPT Review Conference.

¹ Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, China, Croatia, Cyprus, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Korea, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Kingdom and the United States;

Participating Governments supported the ongoing diplomatic processes and efforts to achieve the complete denuclearization of, and lasting peace on, the Korean Peninsula, and reconfirmed their commitment to full and comprehensive implementation of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions 2371(2017), 2375(2017), 2397(2017) as well as previous relevant UNSC resolutions, which, inter alia, reaffirm that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) shall immediately abandon all nuclear weapons and existing nuclear programs in a complete, verifiable and irreversible manner, and immediately cease all related activities. Within the framework of the NSG's mandate, the Participating Governments noted that the supply of all NSG controlled items to the DPRK is prohibited according to the above-mentioned resolutions.

Participating Governments expressed their support for ongoing diplomatic efforts by China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, the United States, the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the Islamic Republic of Iran, aimed at ensuring full and effective implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) endorsed by the UNSC resolution 2231 (2015) and at facilitating a return by the United States and the Islamic Republic of Iran to their commitments under the JCPOA endorsed by UNSC resolution 2231 (2015). Participating Governments expressed their concern in relation to its implementation and urged compliance with UNSC resolution 2231 (2015). Since the last Plenary, the NSG continued to receive briefings from the JCPOA Procurement Working Group Coordinator, regarding the work of the Procurement Channel. Participating Governments expressed interest in receiving further briefings.

The Group noted that discussions continue on the requests for participation that had been submitted.

The Group noted the discussions on the issue of "Technical, Legal and Political Aspects of the Participation of non-NPT States in the NSG".

At the Plenary meeting, the NSG also:

- maintained its focus on technical issues important to the implementation of the control lists by exchanging views on several proposals to clarify and update the NSG control lists;
- discussed and reaffirmed the significance of updating the NSG Guidelines to keep pace with the evolving non-proliferation landscape and a fast-paced nuclear and nuclear-related industry;
- Took note of national experiences in implementing the NSG Guidelines as well as of information and national best practices on licensing and enforcement, e.g. on transit and transshipment issues.

Outreach

- continued to welcome that numerous non-NSG participants have harmonized their national export control systems with the NSG Guidelines and control lists;

- agreed on the value of outreach activities to non-NSG participants, expressing the hope that NSG outreach activities could be resumed soon, conditions permitting;
- continued to exchange views on the national practices of awareness-raising and interaction with industry as well as academic and research institutions, related to NSG controlled items;
- noted the contribution made by the NSG Chair, on behalf of Participating Governments, to the Comprehensive Review currently underway of the status of implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004);
- agreed to update its communication for the benefit of those participating in the rescheduled 2020 NPT Review Conference;
- took note of an informal NSG outreach event with national industry representatives from Participating Governments on 12 November 2019 upon the invitation of the Nur-Sultan 2019 Plenary Chair. The NSG has held informal dialogues with the nuclear industry since the Bern NSG Plenary in 2017;
- continued to consider all aspects of the implementation of the 2008 Statement on Civil Nuclear Cooperation with India and discussed the NSG relationship with India;
- noted, with appreciation to the Russian Federation, the launch of the version of the NSG website in Russian during the 2021 NSG Plenary Week.

The NSG Participating Governments invited all states to express their responsible approach to nuclear exports by adhering to the NSG Guidelines. The Plenary also called on all states to fully implement all UNSC resolutions relevant to the work and purposes of the NSG, to exercise utmost vigilance, and to make every effort to ensure that none of their exports of goods and technologies contribute to nuclear weapons programs.

The NSG Plenary reappointed Ms. Mirjam Kochendörfer of Germany to serve as Chair of the Consultative Group and thanked Mr. Diego Cándano of Mexico for his valuable support, wishing him well for his further career. The NSG Plenary thanked Dr. Per Andersson of Sweden for his valuable and longstanding service to the Group as Chair of the Technical Experts Group, wishing him well for his further career, and appointed Mr. Brent Heilman of the USA to serve as the new Chair of the Technical Experts Group.

The NSG Plenary confirmed that Poland will assume the NSG Chairmanship for the term 2021-2022. Poland nominated Mr. Tomasz ŁękarSKI, Special Envoy, to serve as the new NSG Chair.

Brussels, 25 June 2021