



**EUROPEAN COUNCIL
THE PRESIDENT**

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**Statement by
President Herman VAN ROMPUY,
on behalf of the European Union
at the Nuclear Security Summit in Washington**

Herman Van Rompuy, President of the European Council, participated today in the Nuclear Security Summit held in Washington, where he delivered the following statement on behalf of the European Union.

"We, as world leaders, are responsible for international peace and security. This is in the interest of our peoples and the world community as a whole.

None of our countries, even the most powerful ones, can achieve peace and security alone. Maintaining international security requires collective efforts and cooperation from all states.

Nuclear terrorism, with terrorists getting access to nuclear materials or to radioactive sources, represents a most serious threat to international security with potentially devastating consequences to our societies.

This is a common threat that requires a common response. On behalf of the European Union I commend President Obama for his important initiative that will not only strengthen global nuclear security, but will also contribute to reinforcing the international nuclear non-proliferation regime.

Today's Summit will be the starting point of a joint effort that will require participation on an even broader basis. Reaching out to all players and involving all countries will allow us to advance our shared goal to strengthen nuclear security. Today's meeting sets an ambitious goal of securing all vulnerable nuclear material in four years. We can only achieve it in full co-operation with all UN members. The European Union will extend its co-operation to all members of the international community united in this joint endeavor.

P R E S S

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I reaffirm the European Union's commitment to strengthen nuclear security. Already in 2003, the EU Heads of State and Government adopted the European Security Strategy that identified terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction among the greatest threats to international security. The 2003 EU Strategy against the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction attaches particular importance to international cooperation in strengthening nuclear security. Actions under the EU Counterterrorism Strategy of 2005 complement our efforts to prevent acts of nuclear terrorism.

Our strategy makes the EU a strong advocate of multilateralism and multilateral cooperation. We continue to recognize the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty as the cornerstone of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime and favor a balanced approach between its three pillars: non-proliferation, disarmament and peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

Strengthening nuclear security is an important element of facilitating international co-operation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. In light of the growing global interest in nuclear energy the EU, with its large multinational nuclear industry, has a particular interest in ensuring that the peaceful uses of nuclear energy take place with the highest standards of nuclear safety, security and non proliferation. It is our common interest to work together in the responsible sharing of nuclear technology.

Addressing the threat of nuclear terrorism and proliferation will also assist in creating the conditions for a world without nuclear weapons, in accordance with the objectives of the NPT.

The recently signed START Treaty will make a further important contribution to the ultimate goal of a world without nuclear weapons, for which I commend the leadership of the United States of America and the Russian Federation. I am convinced that the international community will duly appreciate these efforts and that a successful outcome of the upcoming NPT Review Conference is now within reach.

The EU supports all international instruments aimed at strengthening nuclear security. We call on all countries to sign and ratify the amended Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, and fully implement their international Treaty obligations.

The EU underlines the fundamental responsibility of individual states to maintain a high level of nuclear security and to establish an effective and independent regulatory and legislative infrastructure, in accordance with the existing international legal architecture and relevant multilateral instruments.

Within the EU, we have our own supranational nuclear material accountancy and control system in place, which ensures that all civilian nuclear materials are well safeguarded. Our system closely cooperates with the IAEA in the implementation of international safeguards, as well as in providing relevant assistance to third countries. The EU is ready to share its experience and best practices and its regional approach to build confidence with partners and other regions.

It is of particular importance to verify the non-diversion of declared nuclear material but also the absence of undeclared nuclear material and activities. This requires that all states ratify the IAEA Additional Protocol, as all EU Member States have done, and to make it accepted as the current verification standard.

The EU underlines the importance of effective export controls in preventing the illicit transfer of nuclear and radio-active materials. In this regard, we have very robust legislation within the EU, which is being implemented by the national authorities of Member States.

The EU recognizes that nuclear industry and operators play an important role in implementing the highest possible nuclear security standards and practices. We need to further consider how to best involve industrial actors if we wish to succeed in achieving and maintaining over time a high level of nuclear security.

The EU lends its full support to the essential role the IAEA plays in developing and promoting global nuclear security standards, and in providing advice and assistance to countries with a stake in nuclear energy. There is a growing need for assistance and resources in this area. The EU is now the major contributor to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund with a level of funding which is expected to exceed 30 million EUR by the end of 2010. So far, more than 50 countries have benefited from EU assistance and the number continues to grow. Our assistance programmes in Asia, Africa, Latin America, the Mediterranean / Middle East and South East Europe have contributed to the development of the legal and regulatory infrastructure, physical protection upgrades for nuclear material and facilities, as well as enhanced protection of radio-active substances in agricultural, industrial and medical applications. In addition, the EU is about to establish regional centres of excellence in different continents to promote a culture of safety and security in the uses of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes.

Other EU assistance activities, such as provided through the Instrument for Stability and the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Co-operation, also make a substantial contribution to attaining nuclear security objectives. These activities include improving border management capabilities of states, in particular through measures against illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials, and the development of state-of-the-art nuclear material accountancy systems. The EU CBRN action plan, adopted in 2009, contributes to strengthen nuclear security within the EU.

The EU recognizes the important role of other international instruments and initiatives that contribute to strengthening nuclear security. We provide significant financial assistance for the implementation of UN Security Council Resolution 1540. We support the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT), the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI) and contribute actively to the G8 Global Partnership. It is important to pursue coherence among different mechanisms in order to achieve a maximum level of synergies.

The EU supports international co-operation to establish the technological infrastructure and networks necessary to ensure the highest level of nuclear security, in particular through the development of relevant forensic capabilities that should allow to determine the origin of illicitly transferred nuclear and radio-active materials. In the context of ongoing efforts to strengthen IAEA's analytical capabilities, we envisage a specific financial contribution from the Instrument for Stability to the expansion and modernization of the IAEA Safeguards Analytical Laboratory (SAL).

Discussions at this Summit will inspire our efforts to strengthen nuclear security and raise global awareness of risks related to nuclear terrorism. The Summit Communiqué and the comprehensive Work Plan should pave the way for the development of a global nuclear security culture, and for further strengthening the ultimate responsibility for nuclear security at national level. The EU will strive for further co-ordination, consistency and coherence in its nuclear security related work, in close co-operation with international organizations and all interested countries."