Mr. Chairman,

In light of the critical role nuclear energy played in its own development, the Republic of Korea is a strong advocate of the inalienable right of all parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) to use nuclear energy for peaceful purposes. The Treaty’s grand bargain that balanced the need to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons with the commitment to the fullest possible exchange of nuclear equipment, materials and know-how has resulted in the benefits of nuclear energy reaching millions of people across the globe.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has a unique role in this regard. On the one hand, it prevents the spread of nuclear weapons through the implementation of safeguards. On the other, its technical cooperation program is the main mechanism for transferring nuclear technology to Member States. The IAEA’s assistance to its Member States develop and strengthen capacities for the safe, peaceful and secure use of nuclear technology has contributed significantly to sustainable socioeconomic development. In fact, nuclear and isotopic techniques contribute directly to attaining over half of the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Republic of Korea remains a committed support of the IAEA and its mandate of atoms for peace and development. We have demonstrated this commitment in a variety of ways, including by sharing our experience and capabilities with other countries, contributing to the Technical Cooperation Fund (TCF) and engaging in discussions for enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of the TC program and ensuring that TCF resources are sufficient, assured, and predictable.

In this connection, I would like to recall our support of the Peaceful Uses Initiative (PUI), which has become a very meaningful instrument for implementing
Article IV. Since it was launched within the NPT context in 2010, the PUI has mobilized 100 million euros that benefitted over 150 Member States. In addition to mobilizing extrabudgetary contributions to supplement the TCF, the PUI enables the IAEA to react quickly to emerging threats and challenges, including the recent Ebola and Zika outbreaks. Since 2011, the Republic of Korea has contributed an estimated USD 6 million to the PUI in support of a wide variety of projects. We invite all States in a position to do so to join us in promoting “Atoms for Peace and Development” and contribute to this Initiative.

Mr. Chairman,

Ensuring appropriate and effective levels of nuclear safety and security is the responsibility of each state exercising its right to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy. As a forum for cooperation and coordination, the IAEA provides essential support to Member States in their efforts to build a strong and sustainable global framework to prevent unsafe acts and security breaches.

[Nuclear safety]

IAEA Safety Standards have helped many Member States establish and improve national regulatory requirements and guidelines. The Republic of Korea commends the IAEA for its open and transparent efforts to develop and revise the safety standards and will remain an active participant in that work through the Commission on Safety Standards and the Safety Standards Committees. Believing that application of internationally harmonized safety standards to national regulatory frameworks contributes to more effective global nuclear safety, the Republic of Korea encourages all Member States to make full use of the safety standards at the national level.

With regard to international cooperation in the field of nuclear safety, I would like to note the work of the International Nuclear Regulators Association (INRA). The INRA was established to enhance nuclear safety by providing a
forum for regulators to exchange information and good practices on issues like regulatory independence, the development of a global nuclear safety culture and international cooperation. The Republic of Korea has participated since 2006 and is honored to serve as INRA chair in 2018. With the next meeting scheduled for the second half of this year, the Republic of Korea will do its best to ensure the meeting’s success.

The Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties of the Joint Convention takes place next month. The Republic of Korea attaches great importance to role of the Joint Convention in enhancing the level of safety in radioactive waste and spent fuel management worldwide and is looking forward to full and substantive participation in the review process.

[Nuclear security]

Mr. Chairman,

Effective and comprehensive nuclear security of nuclear and other radioactive material is not an obstacle to but a facilitator of peaceful nuclear activities. If we fail to have an appropriate nuclear security measure and face a nuclear terrorist incident, public opinion will turn against peaceful use of nuclear energy and technology. The Republic of Korea welcomes taking appropriate nuclear security considerations into account when planning and implementing technical cooperation projects.

Member States have consistently recognized the IAEA’s central role in strengthening the nuclear security framework globally and in coordinating international cooperation. In keeping with this role, the Republic of Korea believes that resourcing for the implementation of the IAEA’s nuclear security activities should be sufficient, sustainable and reliable. To this end we have contributed USD 7.1 million to the Nuclear Security Fund and invite other Member States to consider supporting the Agency’s activities in this field as well.
Mr. Chairman,

While good progress has been made, the international community must remain vigilant against emerging and evolving threats and continue to strengthen nuclear security. Korea welcomes in this regard the approval of the *Nuclear Security Plan 2018–2021* and appreciates the IAEA’s commitment to addressing emerging nuclear security issues identified by the Member States, such as cyber threats.

With our experience chairing 2012 Nuclear Security Summit and 2016 IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Security, as well as participating in the Nuclear Security Contact Group, the Republic of Korea has been an active contributor to global nuclear security efforts. We will continue to participate actively in the preparatory processes of the 2019 IAEA Ministerial Conference and the 2021 Amended CPPNM Review Conference. We would also like to ask states that have yet to become a party to the ICSANT and the CPPNM and its amendment to do so as early as possible.

In the meantime, Korea is working to strengthen implementation of INFCIRC/904, the Joint Statement on Supporting Nuclear and Radiological Terrorism Preparedness and Response Capabilities, which was circulated in December 2016. Taking this opportunity, we would also like to renew the invitation to IAEA Member States to subscribe to the Joint Statement.

With these remarks, my delegation would like to conclude by reiterating its support of your efforts to guide our deliberations here in Geneva to a successful conclusion.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. /END/