

IV. International cooperation to enhance nuclear security

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On 24–25 March 2014, 53 heads of state and government, as well as representatives of the United Nations, the European Union (EU), the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and Interpol, took part in a Nuclear Security Summit meeting in The Hague, the Netherlands.¹ This was the third in a series of high-level international meetings on preventing nuclear terrorism initiated by US President Barack Obama in 2009.² The previous Nuclear Security Summit meetings were convened in Washington, DC, in 2010, and Seoul, South Korea, in 2012.³

The Hague Nuclear Security Summit meeting sought to build on the work of the previous meetings. One of the main objectives was to review progress that participating states had made since 2010 in implementing national and multilateral commitments toward the goal of securing all nuclear material world-wide. The results were assessed according to three priority tasks: reducing stocks of nuclear materials; improving the security of nuclear and radioactive sources; and improving international cooperation.⁴ A second objective of the meeting was to consider regulatory, legal and institutional measures to strengthen the global nuclear security architecture on a sustainable basis in the future.

The organization of The Hague Nuclear Security Summit meeting was similar to that of the Seoul meeting in 2012. It featured the participation of leaders from the same states and international organizations. It also produced a final communiqué, new national commitments and new multilateral commitments, known as ‘gift baskets’, based on joint statements.⁵

In one gift basket, 35 states pledged to take steps towards building a more robust nuclear security framework. The steps included implementing ‘the intent’ of the recommendations contained in the IAEA Nuclear Security Series documents in national regulations; accepting periodic peer reviews; ensuring that management and personnel with responsibility for nuclear

¹ Nuclear Security Summit 2014, The Hague, 24–25 Mar. 2014, ‘Countries and achievements’, <<http://www.nss2014.com/en/nss-2014/countries-and-achievements>>.

² In a speech in Prague in Apr. 2009, US President Barack Obama identified nuclear terrorism as the most immediate and extreme threat to global security and called for holding a global summit on nuclear security in 2010 as part of an effort to secure all vulnerable nuclear material around the world within 4 years. White House, Office of the Press Secretary, Remarks by President Barack Obama, Prague, 5 Apr. 2009, <<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-prague-delivered>>.

³ For detail on the nuclear security summit process, see Anthony, I., ‘Measures to combat nuclear terrorism’, *SIPRI Yearbook 2013*, p. 358.

⁴ Nuclear Security Summit 2014, ‘Results of the NSS 2014’, [n.d.] <<http://www.nss2014.com/en/nss-2014/results>>.

⁵ Davenport, K., ‘Nuclear Security Summit’, Arms Control Association, Fact Sheet, Apr. 2014, <<http://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/NuclearSecuritySummit>>.

security were ‘demonstrably competent’; and taking other measures to ‘ensure continuous improvement’ in nuclear security.⁶

At the end of the two-day event, the participating states and international organizations adopted by consensus a concluding communiqué.⁷ The communiqué noted that important progress had been made in reducing or eliminating national stocks of highly enriched uranium (HEU)—one of the most urgent priorities addressed in the nuclear security summit meetings.⁸ It called on states to continue efforts to minimize the use of HEU, including by converting research reactors to use low-enriched uranium (LEU) as fuel instead of HEU. In addition, it called on states to ‘keep their stockpile of separated plutonium to the minimum level . . . consistent with national requirements’.⁹ This marked the first time that a summit communiqué included a statement on the need to minimize the production of separated plutonium, which is held in sizeable civilian inventories worldwide.¹⁰

The communiqué reaffirmed the participants’ support for existing agreements and mechanisms designed to secure the storage, handling and transport of nuclear material, in accordance with international guidelines and best practices. It called on states, regulatory bodies and the nuclear industry to build and sustain a strong nuclear security culture through, among other means, expanding nuclear security education networks and training centres. At the same time, the communiqué urged states to ratify the 2005 amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material, which places legal requirements on signatories to protect their nuclear facilities and material and expands cooperation in recovering stolen material.¹¹

Further, the communiqué highlighted the central role of the IAEA in the global nuclear security architecture.¹² It noted that the IAEA’s Nuclear Security Series of publications provided the basis for effective nuclear security measures at national level. The IAEA’s Integrated Nuclear Security Support Plans (INSSP) and its International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) were similarly identified as providing important review and advisory services to assist states in strengthening nuclear security. The communiqué also highlighted the IAEA’s role in promoting

⁶ Nuclear Security Summit 2014, ‘Strengthening nuclear security implementation’, 25 Mar. 2014, <http://www.nss2014.com/sites/default/files/documents/strengthening_nuclear_security_implementation.pdf>.

⁷ Nuclear Security Summit 2014, ‘The Hague Nuclear Security Summit communiqué’, 25 Mar. 2014, <http://www.nss2014.com/sites/default/files/documents/the_hague_nuclear_security_summit_communique_final.pdf>.

⁸ Nuclear Security Summit 2014 (note 4).

⁹ Nuclear Security Summit 2014, ‘The Hague Nuclear Security Summit communiqué’ (note 7), p. 4.

¹⁰ On global holding of fissile materials see chapter 11, section X, in this volume.

¹¹ Nuclear Security Summit 2014, ‘The Hague Nuclear Security Summit communiqué’ (note 7), p. 2.

¹² Nuclear Security Summit 2014, ‘The Hague Nuclear Security Summit communiqué’ (note 7), p. 3.

international cooperation to develop new detection methods and nuclear forensic technologies and to address nuclear security challenges related to information and cyber security.¹³

At the end of The Hague Nuclear Security Summit meeting, the leaders announced that a fourth summit meeting would be held in the United States in 2016. Russia announced in November 2014 that it would not attend, saying that the summit meetings duplicated the role of existing international organizations like the IAEA, which should be strengthened instead.¹⁴ Russia also complained that the summit meetings lacked democratic procedure, since states hosting the meetings occupied a privileged position in shaping the agenda and that the attending states could 'arbitrarily' develop guidelines that international organizations, with much broader memberships, were then expected to follow.¹⁵

The 2016 nuclear security summit meeting is expected to be the last top-level summit meeting in the series that began in 2010. Some non-governmental experts have proposed establishing a new multilateral process, based on existing international organizations such as the IAEA, for setting objectives and priorities aimed at strengthening the global nuclear security system beyond 2016.¹⁶

¹³ Nuclear Security Summit 2014, 'The Hague Nuclear Security Summit communiqué' (note 7), pp. 5, 6.

¹⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, 'Comment by the Information and Press Department on US media reports that Russia does not intend to take part in preparations for the 2016 Nuclear Security Summit', 5 Nov. 2014, <http://www.mid.ru/bdomp/brp_4.nsf/e78a48070f128a7b4325699005bcbb3/fdb1c2c6f7427fe4c3257d88004155b5!OpenDocument>.

¹⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation (note 14).

¹⁶ See e.g. Findlay, T., 'Beyond nuclear summitry: the role of the IAEA in nuclear security diplomacy after 2016', Discussion Paper, Project on Managing the Atom, Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, Harvard University, 11 Mar. 2014, <http://belfercenter.ksg.harvard.edu/publication/23986/beyond_nuclear_summitry.html>.