

**Statement by Finland**

**Leena Pylvänäinen, Director for Arms Control**

Mr Chair, Co-Chairs, dear colleagues,

Let me begin by thanking the Government of Argentina for hosting this Plenary at the beautiful Palacio San Martin.

For the past two years, Finland has had the privilege to serve the GICNT as IAG coordinator. It's been a busy two-year mandate with more than 20 GICNT events, including exercises, workshops, expert meetings and side-events, in almost all corners of the globe.

Last June, we had the pleasure of hosting partner nations and international observers at an IAG meeting in Helsinki, and just a few weeks ago, a Nuclear Forensics Experts planning meeting to prepare the work plan that will be discussed later on at this meeting.

We are grateful for all the support we've received throughout our mandate – from the Co-Chairs, the Russian Federation and the United States, from the working group chairs, the United Kingdom, Canada and Argentina, and from all the countries that hosted events over these past two years. Chairing the IAG really has been a team effort – a big thank you to all of you.

Based on our experience, we are more convinced than ever of the continuing value of the GICNT as a platform for cooperation. Our work here is hands-on and practical, but also politically significant. It is important that this cooperation has continued despite the well-known challenges in the international fora. Cooperation between experts also serves to build and maintain mutual trust and dialogue – much needed today.

We all face the threat of terrorism, and we need to tackle it together. By pooling our knowledge and experience, we all stand to gain.

In Finland, we recently adopted our first national CBRNE strategy. In drafting it, we benefited in a very concrete manner from lessons learned in the context of GICNT cooperation. In turn, we've been pleased to be able to share our experiences and national approaches, for example in nuclear detection – such as at the Cuning Karl workshop in Karlsruhe last February.

We have also been happy to contribute to one of the thematic priorities identified at the last Plenary, radiological source security. In a joint project with the US-based Stimson Center, we have produced a database analysing how states have implemented key international guidance on radiological source security. The database shows serious gaps in implementation – a call for further work in this important area, also within the GICNT.

Other topics where we feel sustained efforts are needed include enhancing information sharing – at national and international level, and also of sensitive information, where needed –, outreach, and political advocacy and awareness-raising.

Mr Chair,

Finland will continue to play an active role in the GICNT also in the future. We will offer our full support to Morocco as incoming IAG Coordinator, and to the Co-Chairs and Working Group chairs in implementing our network's working plans.

We are also prepared to host another GICNT event in Finland in 2020. The joint Nordic-Baltic exercise will contribute to the activities of the Response and Mitigation Working Group, and possibly include also elements of nuclear detection. In the spirit of regional cooperation, the exercise will be organised together with partner nations in the region. We will also continue to support, including with financing, the organisation of GICNT events.

To conclude, Mr Chair, let me thank you once more for hosting us today. We look forward to continued close cooperation with you and with all other partners.