



UN Security Council Media Stake-out Briefing on the nuclear safety and security in Ukraine New York, 30 May 2023

30.05.2023

Good evening,

I'm speaking here as a member of the Swiss government, in my capacity as a national representative.

Under Switzerland's presidency, the Security Council has just concluded a meeting on the safety of nuclear facilities in Ukraine.

The discussions focused on the issue of the safety and security of the Zaporizhzhia power plant.

The participants of the meeting, including a representative of Ukraine, were briefed by the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Rafael Grossi.

France and Ecuador requested this meeting and Switzerland worked hard, consulting carefully with all members of the Council, to prepare it.

We were also in close contact with the IAEA to arrange this meeting. Switzerland and the Agency share the same concern: the protection of civilians in armed conflicts.

This commitment ties in with one of the priorities of Swiss foreign policy: respect for international law, in particular international humanitarian law. Switzerland has repeatedly made clear its position on the Russian military aggression against Ukraine and the importance of the respect for international law.

As the backbone of international humanitarian law, the Geneva Conventions and their protocols are crystal clear in their wording:

First, civilian infrastructures must not be attacked in armed conflict; and second, civilians must be protected from the consequences of war - including in occupied territories.

We are all aware of the risks posed to the civilian population when a nuclear power plant is in the middle of an armed conflict. It is our duty to mitigate these grave risks.

Switzerland therefore welcomes the continued commitment of the IAEA – and its Director General – to ensure that the obligation to protect nuclear facilities in Ukraine is respected.

Last year, the IAEA formulated seven pillars that are indispensable for nuclear safety and security in armed conflicts. Switzerland fully supports this work.



Switzerland also supports the IAEA's proposal to protect the Zaporizhzhia power plant by means of five concrete principles.

This is precisely the approach we need to take in this crisis.

Ladies and Gentlemen

Switzerland calls on all members of the Council to support the Agency's seven pillars and five principles.

In particular, we call on the Russian Federation and Ukraine to commit themselves to respecting these five principles.

I would now like to give the floor to Director General Grossi.