

This statement made in relation with the OECD Recommendation of the Council on Improving the Gender Balance in the Nuclear Sector [OECD/LEGAL/0496] is recorded in the summary record of the 2023 Meeting of the Council at Ministerial Level that was held on 7-8 June 2023 [C/M(2023)10].

STATEMENT BY THE UNITED STATES

The United States strongly supports this Recommendation, recognizing every citizen has the right and opportunity, without distinction, to take part in the conduct of public affairs. Advancing gender equity and equality is fundamental to every individual's economic security, safety, health, and ability to exercise their human rights. It is also essential to economic growth and development, democracy and political stability, and the security of nations across the globe. Ensuring that all people, regardless of gender, have the opportunity to realize their full potential is, therefore, both a moral and strategic imperative. This is equally true in the nuclear sector, but equally qualified women have historically been underrepresented in this important sector. This Recommendation is laudable in its effort to recognize and remedy this problem.

The United States intends to implement this recommendation in good faith. Nonetheless, the United States would call attention to the fact that the U.S. Constitution and laws also provide for equal protection under the law. Therefore, in most circumstances, U.S. law prohibits providing a preference for any specific gender in hiring and other decisions. These equal protection and civil rights laws are fundamental for the United States and work to prevent discrimination, including discrimination against women. Therefore, recognizing that the Recommendation provides that Adherents should "direct, incentivize, or encourage, as applicable" specified actions, the United States intends to interpret and implement the Recommendation in light of these important U.S legal constraints.

The best way to improve the situation of women and girls is through legal and policy reforms that end discrimination and promote and provide equal access to opportunities.