Six years ago, we gathered in this same convention centre and pledged to address the threat of nuclear terrorism. We have made good progress since then, bringing us to this fourth meeting and I would like to thank President Obama for his personal commitment and his leadership which has done so much to bring us thus far.

Singapore does not have significant nuclear material or facilities but we still take our responsibilities seriously, because we like every other country can be vulnerable to the nuclear threat. We could be a place where illicit material passes through our port. We could be a target of attack and even if something happens elsewhere beyond our borders, its spill-over effects could affect Singapore’s population.

Therefore, we actively support counter-proliferation and nuclear disarmament in three ways. Firstly, as a global transhipment hub, Singapore is committed to combating illicit trafficking. Since the start of the Nuclear Security Summit process, we have tightened up our export control regime and upgraded radiation screening technology at our ports. We track every case of nuclear fuel transiting through Singapore and from time to time, we have intercepted cargo and confiscated items. In one recent case, we discovered a significant amount of thorium, a radioactive element. It had been imported into Singapore not as nuclear material, but as a contaminant of another chemical used as a coolant for printed circuit boards. Our first border laboratory – “Protective, Analytical and Assessment Facility” – will be operational by this year and it will be able to conduct radiation-nuclear detection and analysis, to interdict illicit activities at the border.
Secondly, Singapore cooperates closely and willingly with international efforts. We participate in the PSI - the Proliferation Security Initiative. We adopt Financial Action Task Force Recommendations to combat proliferation financing. We host the INTERPOL Global Complex for Innovation, which fosters information sharing among countries, to counter transnational threats and networks that exploit new technology. The Iranian nuclear dossier is another example. Singapore did our part and fully implemented the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) resolutions and therefore, we are happy that the matter has been brought to a satisfactory outcome. There had been some expectations that we would go beyond that but as a small, open economy, dependent on the international rule of law in all cases, it would have been very difficult for us to act unilaterally, and exceed what had been mandated by the United Nations.

Thirdly, we encourage countries to reduce nuclear weapons steadily to zero so that they will never be used again, whether by accident or design. I hope this Summit will see countries committing to reduce their nuclear material stockpiles further, which can make for ready terrorist targets. We are very concerned by developments on the Korean peninsula, in particular in the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK). The DPRK continues to develop nuclear capabilities to conduct tests and to raise tensions in North East Asia. If its neighbours respond and feel compelled to move closer to threshold status, it would gravely destabilise the whole region. I therefore urge the DPRK government to refrain from further provocations and to abide by its international obligations and I hope all countries will encourage the DPRK to restrain itself and work towards denuclearisation of the Korean peninsula. I am encouraged that the recent UNSC resolution 2270 passed unanimously. All of the P5 members supported it. This sends a strong signal to the DPRK and should make a positive contribution towards a good outcome.

The recent terrorist attacks in Pakistan, Brussels, Iraq, Turkey, France, Indonesia, Egypt, Nigeria – and the list goes on – show that we are all vulnerable to terrorism and doubly so to nuclear terrorism. The ISIS’ English language magazine Dabiq published an article in the 9th issue in May last year, which highlighted a nuclear terrorism scenario where ISIS purchased a nuclear device from the black market to launch a major attack. It shows their intent, and it is a threat which countries must take seriously. Nuclear terrorism may not be the most imminent of the threats we face or the most urgent, but it is a very plausible and believable threat which can easily become a reality and if it ever happens, it would be disastrous. So we must, as an
international community, continue to fight against nuclear terrorism and this series of summits, I am confident, has done a significant part to help towards that fight.

Thank you.