

UK statement on Technical Cooperation to the IAEA Board of Governors

The United Kingdom supports the IAEA's Technical Cooperation programme, which plays a vital role in delivering the safe and secure exchange of nuclear technologies and expertise for peaceful uses, as envisaged in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It is essential that all countries can access the benefits of the peaceful uses of nuclear technologies. This is why the United Kingdom will – later this year – host a Forum to review the outcomes of the recent workshops on expanding access to these benefits.

It is also why the United Kingdom pays our TCF target in full and on time. This is in addition to the €17 billion the UK spent on International Development in 2019. We urge other Member States to pay their contributions to the TCF in full and on time to minimise any constraints on the effectiveness of the Agency's development projects.

We recognise that the increasing use of nuclear technology means that the Agency is trying to do more with less, and therefore encourage the Agency to implement the important OIOS recommendation to develop long and medium-term strategies to help prioritise its efforts in the areas where they can make the biggest impact. We also call on the Agency to ensure robust governance mechanisms are in place to ensure accountability and transparency of TC programmes.

Chair,

The use of nuclear technology is increasingly important to combat global challenges and achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). We welcome the Agency's work to assist Member States to combat the Covid-19 pandemic, as an example of how the Agency can rapidly deliver support to those most in need. We encourage the Secretariat to build on this success, and ensure that all Member States can fully realise the benefits of all forms of technical cooperation. To this end, we encourage the IAEA to do more to support Least Developed Countries in accessing a much higher percentage of the TC Fund.

Chair,

Climate change is another challenge which affects us all and the UK commends the work of the TC programme to increase access to nuclear technologies for monitoring, mitigating and adapting to climate change. We encourage the Secretariat to continue to link into the wider UN response on this issue and to ensure a joined approach across IAEA departments. The UK will host the rescheduled COP26 in November 2021 and we look forward to working closely with the IAEA to show the part that nuclear technologies can play in the fight against climate change.

Nuclear energy also has an important role to play in tackling climate change

and delivering a sustainable energy supply for the future. In the United Kingdom, the National Nuclear Laboratory has deepened its co-operation with the IAEA in this area. I am delighted to announce that this cooperation will form the basis of the first ever UK-IAEA Collaborating Centre.

Finally Chair,

We welcome the expansion of female participation in the TC programme noted in the report, as well as the increasing focus of gender within specific projects. The United Kingdom continues to support the IAEA's work on gender equality.

With these comments, the UK takes note of document GOV/2020/19

Thank you, Chair