

UK Statement to the 63rd International Atomic Energy Agency General Conference

Madam President,

Congratulations on your appointment as President of this Conference. It is my great pleasure to lead the UK's delegation this year, and to continue the close partnership between the UK Government and the IAEA.

It is with sadness that I reflect on the passing of former Director General Amano. A committed public servant and friend of the United Kingdom, he led the Agency through significant challenges and leaves a positive legacy for global peace, security and development.

Madam President,

The UK Government is committed to tackling the global challenge of climate change. We recently became the first major economy to set a target of net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050.

We believe nuclear energy will play a key role in achieving this, so our landmark Nuclear Sector Deal is bringing industry and Government together to ensure the nuclear sector thrives in the UK.

As work progresses on our new nuclear power plant at Hinkley Point C, we are exploring innovative financing models for new build projects and ways to reduce the costs of decommissioning. We are also exploring the potential of small and advanced modular reactors.

At the same time, our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy will develop new talent and a diverse workforce for the UK.

Mindful of our responsibilities to future generations, we have also launched consent-based processes to identify a location for a Geological Disposal Facility for our higher activity radioactive waste.

Madam President,

Next year's 50th anniversary of the Non-Proliferation Treaty is an important moment to emphasise the importance of its three Pillars, and celebrate the Agency's support for its peaceful uses and non-proliferation aspects.

The UK is among the biggest supporters of the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme for sustainable development. I am proud to pledge our 2020 contribution of €3.8m to the TC Fund today. I urge all Member States to join us in pledging and paying their full share.

It is right that more countries benefit from peaceful nuclear technologies.

But this brings responsibilities to protect people and maintain public acceptance of nuclear energy.

If something goes wrong, whether accidental or deliberate, all States must meet their obligations to openness and transparency with their neighbours.

We strongly support the IAEA's work to help Member States implement robust nuclear safety and security measures. To ensure our own regulations meet the highest standards, the UK will host an Integrated Regulatory Review Service mission next month. We encourage others to use IAEA advisory services.

Madam President,

The application of IAEA safeguards is indispensable for global peace and security. All States should ratify an Additional Protocol, the gold standard for safeguards agreements. The UK's own new safeguards arrangements are ready and will ensure we continue to meet our obligations once EURATOM arrangements no longer apply to the UK.

However, some States continue to challenge the global non-proliferation system.

The UK calls on Iran to reverse its suspension of stockpile and enrichment limits and comply with its obligations under the JCPOA. We welcome the Agency's monitoring of Iranian compliance with the deal, and we remain committed to its full implementation.

North Korea's recent missile launches and violations of UN resolutions are of great concern. We are clear that sanctions must remain in place until North Korea takes concrete steps towards denuclearisation. Finally, Syria has not met its safeguards obligations since 2011. This issue must remain on the Board's agenda until Syria returns to full compliance with its obligations.

Madam President,

The UK will continue to give the Secretariat, and the future Director General, our full support in fulfilling the Agency's unique and important role.

Thank you.