

AUSTRIA

**Statement by Minister-Counsellor Georg Oberreiter
Minister-Counsellor of Austria to the UN in Vienna**

IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science, Technology and Applications and the Technical
Cooperation Programme
Vienna, 26 November 2024

Chairs!

Director-General!

Dear Heads of Delegation!

Dear delegates!

Please let me first express my warmest welcome to all of you - as proud host country of the
International Atomic Energy Agency – Welcome to Vienna!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

We fully align ourselves with the statement of the European Union and I would like to make
some comments in my national capacity.

Nuclear science can be of great help to address global challenges in health, agriculture, and
pollution management. Initiatives of the Agency like Rays of Hope for improved cancer care,
Atoms4Food for food security and NUTEC Platics to combat plastic pollution, enhance the
quality of life for all. These initiatives drive innovation and make nuclear technology a
beacon of hope for mankind.

We are especially proud of the Seibersdorf Laboratories, modernized under ReNuAL, that are
central to the IAEA's mission, offering training, research, and solutions in food safety, health,
and environmental monitoring. This modernization ensures these facilities remain at the
cutting edge, supporting Member States in applying nuclear science for peaceful development.

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While we underline the importance of nuclear science, there are things we cannot subscribe to. As you know, we fully respect each countries sovereign right to choose its own energy mix. However, in our view, nuclear power cannot be deemed neither safe nor sustainable.

Austria's position on nuclear power is clear and stems from a serious concern for our common future. We are concerned about the environmental damages and the health damages of nuclear accidents. Furthermore, we are concerned about the still unresolved question of what to do with nuclear waste.

That being said - for those opting in favour of the use of nuclear power - we urgently underline the necessity to uphold the highest standards with due priority to safety and security.

Continuously improving nuclear safety for existing installations has to be implemented based on the Principles established under the "Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety" of the CNS (Convention on Nuclear Safety). IAEA nuclear Safety Standards must also be fulfilled by so-called "advanced" or "innovative" technologies.

Let me also take this opportunity to highlight the importance of gender equality. It is of the utmost importance to include women in all activities of the IAEA to reap all benefits from nuclear science. Austria will continue to be a champion for gender equality and human rights!

Mr. President!

I wish you and all of us a very successful Ministerial Conference! Please be assured that the Austrian delegation will fully support you and your team in chairing and steering this important conference.

We consider it a privilege to host all delegations and the Agency and its experts here in Vienna.

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The Agency's contribution to international peace, security and development cannot be overstated.

I thank you.