

**Statement by H.E. Peter Burian
President of the 69th Regular Session of the IAEA General
Conference
15 September 2025**

Excellencies,

Director-General Rafael Mariano Grossi,

Distinguished Delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

When we gather in this hall each year, we are reminded of a simple but powerful truth: that even in uncertain times, nations choose to come together, to listen, and to work side by side. It is a privilege to stand before you today, entrusted with the responsibility of guiding our deliberations. I thank you sincerely for that trust.

Let me also recognize my predecessor, H.E. Ambassador HAM Sang Wook, for his leadership of last year's Conference. I further express appreciation to Director-General Grossi and the Secretariat. Their steady work ensures that the Agency continues to serve all of us with professionalism and impartiality. The achievements of the IAEA are

possible only through the commitment of its staff, who carry out their duties often in challenging circumstances.

The IAEA's founding vision—Atoms for Peace and Development—remains clear. But the challenges we face today are more complex than at any time since 1957. Armed conflicts have placed nuclear facilities at risk. Confidence in the non-proliferation regime is being tested. At the same time, humanity faces the twin pressures of climate change and energy insecurity. These realities remind us that the work of the Agency is not abstract; it is directly connected to the safety and prosperity of people worldwide.

The Agency's response demonstrates its unique role. Through safeguards and verification, it helps maintain international trust. By supporting nuclear safety and security, it reduces risks even in fragile situations. And by advancing nuclear applications—from medical treatment to food security and environmental protection—it delivers solutions that are practical and life-changing. This ability to serve as both a guardian of security and a partner in development makes the Agency indispensable.

Excellencies,

Allow me to share the experience of my own country, the Slovak Republic. Slovakia is a proud example of how the peaceful use of nuclear energy can contribute to stability, growth, and sustainability. Today, nuclear power generates more than half of our electricity—among the highest shares in the European Union—helping us ensure energy security, reduce emissions, and meet climate commitments. Our journey has not been without challenges, but it shows that with strong commitment to safety, transparency, and cooperation with the Agency, nuclear energy can become a true success story.

Looking ahead, nuclear energy will remain an essential part of the global effort to meet climate goals and provide reliable electricity. Alongside other clean technologies, it offers a path to stability in a time of transition. Innovation in small modular reactors, advanced designs, and new technologies opens opportunities—provided that our commitment to safety, security, and non-proliferation remains absolute.

The agenda before us this week is broad and demanding. Our discussions will touch on peace and security, but also on health, environment, and sustainable development. Differences in perspective are inevitable. What matters is how we address them—through dialogue, respect, and compromise. That is the spirit that Vienna has come to symbolize, and it is the spirit that must guide us throughout this session.

As President, I will do my utmost to ensure that every delegation is heard, that our work is conducted fairly and transparently, and that this Conference concludes with results that strengthen the Agency and benefit us all. I am confident that if we engage with openness and mutual respect, we will be able to deliver meaningful and balanced outcomes.

Let us use this session not only to resolve the items on our agenda, but also to reaffirm something greater: that even in a divided world, cooperation is possible; that even in difficult times, trust can be built; and that even in the face of uncertainty, this Agency can remain a source of peace, stability, and progress.

Thank you.