

**69<sup>th</sup> IAEA General Conference**  
**New Zealand National Statement**  
**Delivered by HE Andrew Williams**

**September 2025, Vienna**

Mr President,

Thank you for the opportunity to address the General Conference. Congratulations on your election — please be assured of New Zealand's full cooperation throughout this Conference. I am honoured to serve alongside you in the role of Vice-President.

Mr President,

At the outset, New Zealand reaffirms its strong commitment to the IAEA's essential mission: preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and ensuring that nuclear technology is used peacefully, safely, and securely.

Non-proliferation remains the cornerstone of this mission. The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) is as vital today as ever. We are not safer when more nuclear weapons are in the hands of more countries. Despite the challenges facing us, the non-proliferation regime still holds as one of the most significant achievements of the multilateral system. It is imperative that all countries work together to ensure this continues to be the case into the future.

New Zealand has also joined other complementary instruments that reinforce the non-proliferation framework established by the NPT.

These include the Treaty of Rarotonga, which established our region's nuclear weapon-free zone, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. We encourage others to do the same.

Mr President,

The non-proliferation system faces several serious and concurrent challenges.

Iran's nuclear activities have long been a concern for New Zealand and many others. These concerns led to the adoption of a resolution at the Board of Governors in June, finding Iran in non-compliance with its Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement. That was — and remains — a serious finding. Iran is not meeting its obligations, and it must do so.

That resolution also underscored the need for a diplomatic solution to this issue. Dialogue and diplomacy are still the only path to achieving a sustainable and enduring solution.

Russia's full-scale illegal invasion of Ukraine has created extraordinary risks to nuclear safety and security. Its seizure and occupation of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant (ZNPP) significantly heightens the risk of a nuclear accident or incident. New Zealand continues to support the Director General and the Agency in their vital work on this issue, including their presence on the ground. We have made financial contributions specifically to support the Agency's work in Ukraine, in addition to our regular contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund.

We again call on Russia to cease its unlawful occupation of ZNPP and to fully withdraw from Ukraine's sovereign territory.

The DPRK's development of nuclear weapons, other weapons of mass destruction, and their delivery systems pose a clear and grave threat to regional and international peace and security. They undermine the global non-proliferation regime and fuel tension and instability. New Zealand will continue to support efforts toward achieving complete, verifiable and irreversible denuclearisation of the DPRK. It is critical that all Member States likewise continue to press the DPRK to refrain from further escalatory actions and to choose dialogue over confrontation.

However, these challenges must not weaken our collective commitment to non-proliferation or to the work of the IAEA.

Mr President,

New Zealand supports the principle that nuclear technology should be available for peaceful uses. But we must also recognise that the expansion of nuclear energy brings increased risks. That is why New Zealand strongly supports the Agency's work to promote the highest standards of safety, security, and safeguards.

While New Zealand does not use nuclear power, we recognise the important role nuclear technology plays in contributing to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals, including in our Pacific region.

Nonetheless, we remain concerned about the sustainability, waste management challenges, and other risks associated with nuclear power. All Member States developing or using nuclear power must apply the highest standards of safety, security, and safeguards throughout the entire fuel cycle — including transport and waste management. This applies equally to innovative reactor designs such as small and medium-sized modular reactors, transportable nuclear power plants, and any future use in civil merchant fleets.

Mr President,

Member States will naturally hold differing views on the work of the IAEA. That is to be expected. As we debate the various resolutions in front of us, we encourage delegations to listen closely to one another and, where necessary, to return to language that we know has, and can continue to command broad agreement.

Mr President,

Let me conclude by reaffirming New Zealand's strong support for the Director General, the Agency staff, and the critical role the IAEA plays in the multilateral system. We call on all Member States to lend the Agency their full support and cooperation as it undertakes this important work.