

IAEA General Conference 2025 National Statement

[Mr/Madame] [Vice-]President,

We are entering a golden age of nuclear innovation.

Technology is moving at an unprecedented pace, as the world reawakens to the role nuclear can play in providing clean, secure, homegrown power.

Three years ago, at COP28 in Dubai, the UK was proud to be one of the first signatories to the global pledge to 'Triple Nuclear by 2050'.

Today, I can confirm that nuclear power remains an essential part of our plans to deliver Net Zero and secure our energy supply.

The IAEA plays a central role in this mission, both for the UK and all states wishing to pursue safe and secure civil nuclear power and its non-power applications to achieve their energy security ambitions.

And we, too, are investing in the next generation of nuclear technologies.

At the start of the summer, the UK announced the biggest nuclear programme in half a century.

- Including £14bn for Sizewell C, the first new nuclear power station in almost a decade - a major step towards reducing our dependence on global fossil fuel markets and bringing down energy bills, working closely with EdF (Electricite de France) and the French Government.
- £2.5 billion for Small Modular Reactors – with Rolls Royce SMR selected as the preferred bidder.
- A further £2.5 billion for next-generation nuclear fusion – which will drive forward plans to build a first-of-its-kind commercial fusion power plant.
- A £300m investment in HALEU (high-assay low enriched uranium) fuel for advanced reactors, as part of our commitments with our Sapporo 5 partners – US, Canada, France and Japan.
- We are also delivering on our Nuclear Skills Plan, launched last year, bringing government, industry and academia together to

address skills gaps as we build the future workforce we need. We continue to work with allies as we address collective skills needs.

Yesterday, we announced a new civil nuclear agreement with the US administration ahead of the President's State Visit to speed up projects and reduce duplication, demonstrating that the UK is a world-leading place to invest and build.

Over the past year we've already seen £50 billion in investment into clean energy industries in our country. Today builds on that with private sector coming forward to back our golden age of nuclear.

As we continue to break new ground, we are also clear about the need to balance the ever-increasing interest in Advanced Nuclear Technologies with safety, security and sustainability.

The UK's Regulatory Taskforce recently released its interim report, recommending we explore how greater collaboration on regulation could maximise benefits and support rapid, cost-efficient global deployment of nuclear power.

Likewise, we continue to advocate for a proportionate approach for fusion regulation separate to nuclear fission, including with international partners through the IAEA and G7.

Mr/Madame] [Vice-]President,

The world needs a strong, adaptable IAEA to continue upholding the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) which has kept the number of states possessing nuclear weapons to the single digits while enabling nuclear's peaceful uses.

The UK's commitment to the Agency as the cornerstone of global nuclear security is unshakeable.

That is why we remain one of the largest annual contributors to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund.

It is why we support the Technical Co-operation Programme, providing over £1.2 million for the Agency's Atoms4Food initiative.

And it is why we encourage any state that has not yet done so to ratify the Amended Convention for the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material - the most important international convention in the field of civil nuclear security.

[Mr/Madame] [Vice-]President,

The UK, US, and Australia are consulting regularly and transparently with the IAEA Secretariat on the safeguards and verification approach for Australia's nuclear-powered submarine programme.

The entry into force of the AUKUS Naval Nuclear Propulsion Agreement in January, and the signature of the UK-Australia Geelong [juh-long] Treaty in July, legally enshrined our commitment to setting the highest non-proliferation standard.

We continue to keep the international community informed, and we welcome the Director General's reporting in this regard.

[Mr/Madame] [Vice-]President,

The Agency can continue to count on our full support in its efforts to strengthen safeguards internationally in the face of both current and future challenges.

To be effective, safeguards must be up-to-date and universal. As such, we call on all states that have not yet done so to sign and ratify Comprehensive Safeguards Agreements with an Additional Protocol as the NPT verification standard, as well as to update or rescind their Small Quantities Protocols. We acknowledge our responsibility to demonstrate

the highest levels of compliance with the NPT and our safeguards agreements.

Unfortunately, Iran's non-compliance with its safeguards obligations, and lack of serious cooperation with the Agency, is a grave concern and challenge for the non-proliferation architecture that keeps us all safe.

The Agency has near zero oversight of Iran's nuclear programme, which is such a concern because of its dangerous nuclear escalation, particularly the production of High Enriched Uranium, which has no credible civilian justification. Iran now has more than 10 significant quantities of HEU – the approximate amount, as defined by the IAEA, of material from which the possibility of manufacturing a nuclear explosive device cannot be excluded.

Due to Iran's significant non-performance of its JCPoA commitments, the UK, France and Germany triggered the snapback mechanism on 28 August. This does not close the door on diplomacy, and we remain open to further dialogue, should Iran take concrete steps to address our concerns.

[Mr/Madame] [Vice-]President,

We are now in the fourth year of Russia's war in Ukraine. The UK is proud to continue providing vital support to Ukraine, including through the IAEA's independent analysis.

We regret that Zaporizhzhia [Zap-or-i-zjha] Nuclear Power Plant remains under Russia's illegal occupation and continue to call for Russia to withdraw from the Plant and restore control to the competent Ukrainian authorities.

Russia is directly accountable for the nuclear safety and security challenges Ukraine now faces, including from its missile strikes on Ukraine's energy grid. Russia must agree a full and unconditional ceasefire to create the space for negotiations on a framework for a lasting peace.

[Mr/Madame] [Vice-]President

Lastly, as we look ahead to the 2026 NPT Review Conference, we must ensure that our obligations, regulations and institutions regarding nuclear safety, security and safeguards remain relevant and effective as we embark on this new era for nuclear.