



Nuclear Communities and Mayors in Focus

Vienna, 27 May 2025

#LetsTalkNuclear



Foreword

In the evolving landscape of nuclear energy, two things are clear: one, that nuclear power is a driver of global progress, and two, that its success is deeply rooted in local communities.

The gathering of global nuclear communities and mayors as part of the IAEA's first International Conference on Stakeholder Engagement for Nuclear Power Programmes marked an important and novel milestone. For the first time, more than 70 mayors and local leaders from nearly 30 countries came together to share their experiences, challenges, and aspirations as hosts of nuclear power plants and related facilities. They sent a clear and powerful message: the success of nuclear energy projects depends, not only on technology and national policy, but on the trust, resilience and vision of the communities that host them.

Nuclear facilities shape the lives of communities for generations. They bring high-skilled jobs, infrastructure, and innovation, and they require long-term commitment and recognition. Host communities are not passive bystanders; they have a crucial role in national energy transitions and deserve recognition for helping achieve national energy priorities.

This role is even more important in light of recent shifts in global energy approaches, including the landmark consensus reached at COP28 in 2023 that nuclear power must be expanded as well as a pledge by more than 30 countries to triple nuclear capacity by 2050. Such ambitions cannot be achieved without the active participation and support of communities that host – or may host – nuclear projects. Their voices must be heard; their concerns and needs addressed; and their contributions valued.

Across the globe, we've seen how informed and engaged communities become powerful partners. This booklet captures and celebrates those partnerships and the importance of ongoing, open dialogue crucial to building trust, fostering inclusion of all stakeholders and ensuring that nuclear projects contribute to local well-being. It also reminds us that communities want to understand and discuss many areas, not just safety. These include local infrastructure development, housing, transport, and quality of life, just to give a few examples. Listening and responding to all their areas of interest is not optional, it's essential.

As we look ahead to the deployment of advanced nuclear technologies, such as small modular reactors, local engagement will be more important than ever. Municipal leaders need to be equipped with the tools, knowledge, and resources to participate fully and confidently in decisions that affect their towns and cities. And they need to be empowered to share that knowledge and experience with policy makers, the general public and most importantly, other communities that currently host or may host nuclear facilities in the future.

The IAEA is proud to support this growing global network of communities united by common purpose. We are committed to amplifying local voices in global nuclear policy forums and fostering international collaboration on this topic because communities are key protagonists in this new, and exciting, chapter for nuclear.

Rafael Mariano Grossi, IAEA Director General



IAEA

International Atomic Energy Agency

Atoms for Peace and Development



Background

Nuclear energy projects influence and shape many aspects of life in host communities over decades. The experiences shared by municipal leaders around the world show that successful nuclear development depends on effective local engagement, clear communication, and long-term support. Communities want to be involved from the beginning, have access to accurate information, and receive equitable recognition for the responsibilities they take on. They also want to be part of the decision-making processes related to nuclear power projects in their communities, especially when it comes to safety, waste management, and economic development.

The IAEA Director General invited mayors and representatives of communities and local governments hosting nuclear facilities worldwide to join the event “Nuclear Communities and Mayors in Focus”, which took place during the first IAEA International Conference on Stakeholder Engagement for Nuclear Power Programmes, held from 26 to 30 May 2025 in Vienna, Austria.

The event served as a unique platform for open dialogue and the exchange of ideas among municipal and local government leaders from around the world. Mayors and community representatives had the opportunity to deliver statements on their experience related to the benefits and challenges of hosting nuclear facilities.

Several speakers emphasized the IAEA’s role in supporting host communities through fostering international collaboration and amplifying their voices in nuclear governance. By helping establish the Global Partnership of Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities, the IAEA has opened new channels for sharing knowledge and experience among nuclear host communities worldwide. These insights highlight the Agency’s growing role as a bridge between global nuclear development and nuclear host communities.

The key considerations and recommendations provided in their messages are summarized on the following pages.



Key takeaways

Nuclear projects can drive socio-economic transformation


Nuclear energy projects, when well integrated with local planning, can drive sustainable national and local socio-economic development and improve infrastructure. Nuclear facilities provide stable, high-paying jobs and support local economies. However, host communities often feel underrecognized for their contributions to national energy systems. Ensuring fair and sustained recognition of nuclear host communities is instrumental to the success of nuclear energy projects. This includes investing in local infrastructure, housing, education, and healthcare as well as promoting economic diversification and innovation at the local level.

- **Bangladesh (Rooppur)**: Stimulated local economy with new roads, malls, hospitals, and schools.
- **Finland (Eurajoki)**: Nuclear business brought jobs, tax revenue, and business opportunities.
- **France (Gravelines)**: EPR2 project aligned with regional reindustrialization, creating up to 15 000 jobs.
- **Russian Federation (Zarechny)**: Enabled modern social infrastructure, high employment levels, investment, and a comfortable urban environment.
- **Spain (Association of Municipalities in Nuclear Areas)**: Premature closures threaten jobs and local development as well as energy security.

Development of the local infrastructure must be considered to ensure sustainability of nuclear projects

Nuclear projects bring rapid change and without adequate investment in housing, services, and infrastructure, communities may experience strain and conflict rather than shared prosperity.

- **Argentina (Zárate)**: Nuclear projects must be integrated with transport, healthcare and other services from day one, otherwise there is a risk that lack of infrastructure could turn opportunity into conflict.
- **Bangladesh (Rooppur)**: Nuclear projects must be considered in the development plan of the host city, otherwise urban development might face significant challenges.
- **United Kingdom (Leiston)**: Sizewell C construction caused traffic and housing strain; mitigation came too late.



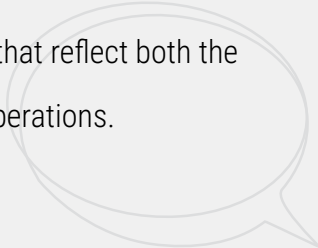
Early and inclusive engagement across nuclear project phases builds trust and consent


Trust is built when engagement is sustained, transparent, and grounded in cultural and community contexts. Communities are more likely to support projects when they see the full arc of responsibility – from planning to decommissioning. In contrast, without transition strategies, policy shifts can lead to economic decline, depopulation and social distress. Establishing formal mechanisms for dialogue, such as stakeholder groups, citizen panels, and local information commissions to understand the community's concerns, needs and expectations is crucial to the success of nuclear projects.

- **Canada (Ignace & Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation)**: 15 years of education and dialogue led to 77 per cent support for hosting a repository in the community.
- **Slovakia (Mochovce)**: In the 1980s, the Mochovce NPP was built without any public input, displacing nearly 500 residents, but trust was later rebuilt through local involvement in its development and operation.
- **Japan (Saga)**: It is essential to disclose any operating anomalies, no matter how small they are, and create systems to deal with any crisis.
- **United States of America (Carlsbad)**: Community support for Waste Isolation Pilot Plant is driven by safety.

Local voices play a fundamental role in shaping national and global nuclear policy

Building capacity and providing resources for informed decision-making at the local level and including local perspectives strengthens the legitimacy and effectiveness of national energy policies and strategies. Local leaders bridge national policy and community needs, ensuring nuclear projects reflect local realities.

- **Netherlands (Borsele)**: Citizen panels defined 39 conditions for hosting new nuclear reactors.
 - **Canada (Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities or CANHC)**: Funding was secured through CANHC to build expertise for small municipalities to address complex nuclear issues.
 - **Ukraine (Varash)**: The community co-developed a strategy formulating goals that reflect both the development of the host city and the specific nature of nuclear power plant operations.
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- **Hungary (Kalocsa, Social Oversight and Information Association or TETT)**: Residents know the mayors personally, trust them, and feel their interests are represented.
 - **India (Bulandshahr)**: As they are closest to the people, local governments are carriers of trust and crucial pillars in energy policy, environmental protection, and emergency communication.
 - **Sweden (Östhammar)**: Hosting both a nuclear power plant and a future spent fuel repository is a national task that is managed at the local level; hence, mayors play a crucial role in ensuring that local community needs are taken into due consideration.
 - **United States of America (Idaho Falls)**: Local government must have a voice and role in relevant nuclear policy conversations and decisions that impact them and their residents.

New nuclear technologies offer new opportunities


Nuclear energy is a reliable, low carbon power source that plays an important role in national and local development. Non-electric applications of advanced reactors can further expand nuclear's societal value.

- **China (Rongcheng)**: High-temperature reactors are used for residential heating and hydrogen production.
- **Republic of Korea (Gyeongsangbuk-do)**: SMRs and hydrogen hubs are integrated into regional development.
- **Canada (Kincardine)**: Isotope production earns global recognition and supports medical innovation.

Acknowledging the legacy of nuclear sites and repurposing them can restore public trust

With proper investment, planning and community engagement, former nuclear sites can be restored and transformed to bring value, promote environmental justice and support social well-being. Ensuring that waste management practices are safe and based on informed community consent is essential. Equally important is recognizing and supporting the long-term responsibilities of nuclear host communities, including for post-operational transitions and decommissioning.

- **Argentina (Malargüe)**: A former uranium site was transformed into El Mirador Park through an engineered process and community inclusion.

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- **Spain (Ascó)**: The Nuclear Transition Fund reinvests part of the nuclear tax revenue directly into the host communities, promoting economic diversification and supporting local businesses and innovation.

National and international cooperation and collaboration are key enablers

National and international collaboration among communities is essential for the success and sustainability of nuclear energy projects, promoting exchange of experience and good practices globally. The IAEA's role in supporting local host communities, through fostering their international collaboration and amplifying their voices in international nuclear policy forums, is an important initiative that will contribute to the successful implementation of nuclear projects worldwide.

- **Europe (Group of European Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities or GMF)**: GMF brings the voices and experiences of nuclear host communities into broader policy and technical discussions.
- **Argentina (Malargüe)**: A national association of nuclear municipalities was formed to advocate for a stronger voice for local governments in national and international nuclear policy.
- **Canada (CANHC)**: Countries exploring nuclear energy can learn about CANHC's approach to community engagement, economic partnerships, and education and workforce development.
- **Türkiye (Gülнар)**: Local authorities benefit from international experiences in the fields of safety, environmental management and public communication.
- **United States of America (Energy Community Alliance or ECA)**: ECA fosters informed decision-making and community engagement to ensure that the environmental, safety, health, and economic priorities of local governments are considered as national-level nuclear energy policy.



“

This gathering of mayors will be the beginning of what I'm sure will be a very successful future for this new dimension of the nuclear family, which is the family of the communities, mayors, cities, towns all over the world hosting nuclear facilities. And that's important to nuclear development because no one is in a better position to speak about the experience of having a nuclear facility in their backyard than those who have hosted one.”

Rafael Mariano Grossi
IAEA Director General

Joint Statement by Mayors of Communities Hosting Nuclear Facilities

Vienna, 27 May 2025

Countries worldwide benefit from nuclear energy as a reliable and carbon-free source of power generation. Communities that host nuclear facilities, from uranium mines and power plants to manufacturing, medical isotope production, research and waste management facilities, play an essential role in enabling the sustainable deployment and safe operation of this technology.

As local leaders, we take the pride and the responsibility of contributing to building a promising future for our children and future generations by enabling the clean energy transition and broader socioeconomic development of our countries. This future depends on a steady source of clean energy to fuel advancements in infrastructure, education, manufacturing, agriculture, and healthcare.

Our communities have experienced firsthand the benefits that nuclear energy can bring, but we are also aware of the associated challenges. The future of nuclear energy must be built on genuine engagement, consent, and sustained support for nuclear communities. As mayors and elected officials of municipalities hosting nuclear facilities, we are committed to working with our citizens, policymakers, national governments, and industry leaders to responsibly shape together a sustainable and inclusive future, acknowledging the vital role that nuclear energy plays in powering our lives, communities, and countries.

Signatories:



This statement remains open for additional endorsements.

Mayors interested in endorsing the joint statement may contact se-ne@iaea.org.





Introductory speech by the IAEA Director General

[Transcript]

Good afternoon, everybody.

This segment of the conference has a very special meaning. As you have seen yesterday and today, this stakeholder meeting and gathering is covering different aspects that have to do with the technologies themselves, with the security of what we are doing, with the communications that we are having. But of course, as someone said, and I think rightly so, all politics are local and everything is local.

And having you here, having more than 70 mayors from almost 30 countries for this first ever meeting of this kind is, in my opinion, absolutely remarkable. I want to thank you and make you feel recognised because from the IAEA perspective, we come to your communities, we visit your communities, we inspect nuclear power plants. We undertake safety and security assessments. We bring experts, we do all sorts of activities, and we feel the vibrancy of the communities, we have enjoyed going there for a long time. And we know how impactful nuclear facilities are, as the short video that we just watched showed us.

From the perspective of our community, a human community, nuclear is a lifetime engagement, a long-standing commitment that lasts for generations that shapes the lives of all those living there. And who better than you as mayors, to be recognized as representatives of your communities by this international gathering today of all those who are in the same or very similar situation.

For all of you, what is so inspiring about a meeting like this, and the contacts with colleagues from other countries, is to see how similar your situations are, including the challenges, the opportunities, the issues, the interactions with people, with local governments at higher levels and in accordance with the constitutional arrangements of all the countries. That's why for us, having this event is absolutely essential – and not as a onetime event that disappears the moment the lights go off. I would like to think that this community of mayors is a successful community that will continue to grow. For, as you know, other mayors were invited; some could not come and many in fact indicated that they would have loved to come, but couldn't for one reason or the other.





An important dimension of all this is that we have associations of communities that have been formed in a certain sense thanks to or as a consequence of this meeting taking place. For me, this is an incredibly rewarding consequence of what we are doing. It is very important that at a community level, we recognize these similarities, these common denominators. We intend to continue this dialogue. Your organisers, my colleagues from the IAEA Department of Nuclear Energy, have been brilliant and I want to thank them for having put this together. It is no easy endeavour to do this, and they will be taking care of this community because we plan to have many different future events around the annual calendar of the IAEA, including the General Conference and others that will be taking place throughout the year and throughout the years to come. So, what I wanted to say is very simple. Let's recognize this community dimension, this local dimension of an activity that really shapes human communities around a very important technological endeavour.

It is very important to recognize this. Unlike many other activities, nuclear is a job-creating activity that brings high skilled workers and in its incredible diversity, creates and nurtures professions. So, I believe, and want to emphasise that for us, this is only the beginning. This gathering of mayors will be the beginning of what I'm sure will be a very successful future for this new dimension of the nuclear family, which is the family of the communities, mayors, cities, towns all over the world hosting nuclear facilities. And that's important to nuclear development because no one is in a better position to speak about the experience of having a nuclear facility in their backyard than those who have hosted one.

I thank you again for having taken the time to come here to Vienna, to familiarize yourselves with the work we carry out here with your permanent missions, with what they do day in and day out. So again, thank you very much. I am looking forward to listening to your testimonies, to listen to your experiences. Your voices will now be heard and recognized. And I am very happy to note that you have signed up to or endorsed a joint statement reflecting this common purpose. I congratulate you. Please feel welcome at the IAEA. This is your home. Thank you very much.





Remarks from Nuclear Communities' Associations and Local Governments





Yoshinori Yamaguchi

Governor of Saga Prefecture, Japan

Good day everyone, my name is Yoshinori Yamaguchi, and I am the governor of Saga Prefecture in Japan.

I would like to thank Director General Grossi for the opportunity to deliver a speech for this session.

I will be speaking of my thoughts on the matter from Saga, as the governor of a prefecture in Japan with an active nuclear power station.

Before acceding my current post, I worked in a government agency, working on crisis management throughout Japan. I was in a position to lead an office at frontline disaster sites to give direct and prompt instruction at the disaster-stricken areas.

To give an example, when the criticality accident at a uranium fuel production facility in Tōkaimura, Ibaraki Prefecture, occurred in 1999, I entered the on-site emergency headquarters on the day of the accident, and directed operations to terminate the critical reaction, and decisions on evacuating residents from the surroundings of the facility. In fact, at the time there was no specific evacuation plan for the area prepared.

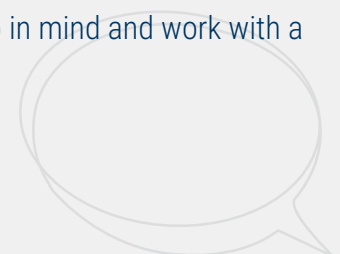
Since I became the governor of Saga in 2015, I have faced and fought several crises, including severe heavy rain disasters, covid-19, and avian influenza.

What I have keenly felt through these experiences, is that when it comes to crisis management, it's of utmost importance to understand what is happening out there in the field as well as at the actual sites. When it comes to nuclear power plants, safety is always of utmost priority.

In 2011, in Japan, a severe accident occurred at the Tokyo Electric Power Company Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant.

"We have to bear in mind what happened at Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant, we must not allow the memory to fade away, and we must never let an accident like it happen again."

I believe this is something everyone involved in nuclear power plants has to keep in mind and work with a strong and constant sense of urgency.





I sincerely believe a world where we can build a society centered around renewable energy is ideal, and something I hope can be realized.

However, the current situation is such that we must, to a certain degree, rely on nuclear energy.

Therefore, I strongly hope that all people living in regions consuming large amounts of electric power could consider these energy issues more, and recognize the issues are not abstract and faraway, but relevant to their own lives as well.

At the nuclear power plant in Saga Prefecture, there are 4 reactors, out of which two are currently decommissioning, and two are operating regularly.

The process of the decommissioning of nuclear facilities requires a long time, taking several decades.

I believe it is important for us as a prefecture with a nuclear power plant to keep the facility operating, from the perspective of securing sufficient personnel and succeeding the expertise and techniques required to ensure safely managed operations and decommissioning.

It is essential that nuclear operators promptly and officially disclose any occurring trouble, no matter how small it is, and explained in a way that the citizens can accurately understand.

Particularly for the nuclear operators within the prefecture, I have ever since become governor demanded adherence to “three fundamental rules” which are very clear.

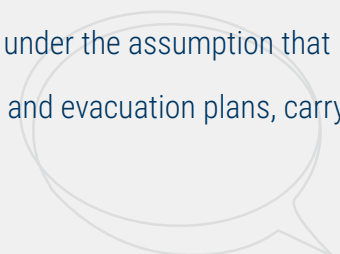
These are:

- “To not lie.”
- “To build organizations with an open culture.”
- And “to create systems prepared to deal with any eventual crisis.”

I repeatedly communicate these three, very fundamental, rules to the nuclear operators.

However, no matter how many precautions operators take and how high the risk awareness is in the field, human error is unavoidable.

We require the government regulatory organization and the operators to prepare under the assumption that mistakes and accidents will occur. We also establish various disaster prevention and evacuation plans, carrying out drills and training every year.





At these drills we work closely with the government regulatory organization, related municipalities, private companies, the Self-Defence Force, and other organizations that are involved in the disaster to conduct effective training for instance, assuming natural disasters occur simultaneously and practicing evacuating residents of outlying islands by helicopter.

We will continue to work on constructing practical systems to ensure effective operations tailored to the field at accident sites.

We love our hometown, Saga. To protect this region, rich in nature and beauty, we are earnestly committed to facing nuclear power plants with the safety of its residents at the forefront of our minds.

Here I'd also like to take the opportunity to speak a bit about Saga Prefecture.

It is located in the northern part of the Kyushu Island, which in turn is western Japan. With a rich food culture fascinating people worldwide, the region prides itself in among others Saga-gyu beef of the highest quality, and sake which has gained recognition by winning the top prize at the prestigious International Wine Challenge competition.

Additionally, there are several authentic local resources that are the pride of Saga globally, such as the Arita and Imari Porcelain Wares, which have fascinated European royalty and nobles for four centuries, and the lively festival "Karatsu Kunchi" recognized as Intangible Cultural Heritage by UNESCO. Saga is a splendid region, with culture, history and nature coexisting in harmony, so I hope to see you all visiting here someday.

Lastly, I would like to ask the IAEA to remember the facts and effects of the severe accidents at Chernobyl, Three Mile Island, and of course Fukushima Daiichi, and work towards improved effectiveness and further strengthening of safety regulations.

Finally, I sincerely hope you have a most successful conference.

Thank you.





Cheol-Woo Lee

Governor of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province,
Republic of Korea

Dear Director General Rafael Grossi of the IAEA, Distinguished nuclear energy experts and policymakers from around the world. Warm Greetings to you all.

I am Lee Cheol-Woo, Governor of Gyeongsangbuk-do Province, Republic of Korea. It is a great pleasure to join this meaningful gathering to discuss the peaceful use of nuclear energy and international cooperation.

I sincerely hope this conference will serve as a valuable opportunity to share national policies and experiences, and to open new paths for future energy cooperation.

Gyeongsangbuk-do is the heart of Korea's nuclear industry. In 1983, Korea's First heavy-water reactor, Wolsung Unit 1 began commercial operation in Gyeongju. And since 1988, the Hanul nuclear power plant has been in full operation in Uljin.

For more than 40 years, Gyeongsangbuk-do has played a vital role in Korea's industrialization and securing a stable power supply. Even today, half of Korea's nuclear power capacity is located in our province. Design is handled by KEPCO E&C (Korea Electric Power Engineering & Construction Company) in Gimcheon. In Gyeongju, the Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power (KHNP) is in charge of plant operation, and the Korea Radioactive Waste Agency (KORAD) is responsible for waste management.

From plant design and operation to decommissioning and waste management, we are proud to have a world-class, full-cycle nuclear industry cluster. Amid recent challenges – surging energy prices, the climate crisis, and geopolitical instability – we are reminded of the value and role of nuclear energy.

The nuclear ecosystem is not just a source of energy. It is a strategic national asset for future generations and innovative industries. The construction of Shin-Hanul Units 3 and 4, and the development of SMR technology are clear and responsible answers to these pressing global needs.

Gyeongsangbuk-do is now ushering in a new era – what we call a Nuclear Renaissance. Today, Gyeongju and Uljin Have been designated as national industrial complexes for SMRs and nuclear based hydrogen respectively.



Gyeongju is emerging as a hub for SMR manufacturing and technology development. Uljin is rising as a center for clean hydrogen production and R&D using nuclear Power. These initiatives will contribute significantly to Korea's energy transition and balanced regional development.

We are also cultivating top talent in collaboration with POSTECH, the Korea Nuclear Meister High School, the institute of Nuclear Education and Training, and the Munmu Daewang Science Research Center. Together, we are building a nuclear innovation ecosystem that closely links research, industry, and policy.

Distinguished guests,

Nuclear Power is more than technology. It is a shared global asset for the future of humanity, grounded in international solidarity. Gyeongsangbuk-do will continue to work closely with the IAEA and the global community, placing top priority on safety and transparency in nuclear energy.

We will also take an active role in sharing technology, fostering talent, and promoting the peaceful use of nuclear power. For the past 40 years, the people of Gyeongsangbuk-do have quietly and faithfully supported Korea's nuclear policies. Now, building on that foundation, we are designing a new nuclear era for the next 100 years.

I hope this conference will help us forge even stronger connections for the future. I wish you all health and peace. Also, I would like to invite you to the upcoming APEC Economic Leader's Meeting, which will be held in Gyeongju, Gyeongsangbuk-do this October.

We aim to make it an unprecedented stage for economic cooperation, cultural exchange, and global peace. We look forward to your interest and collaboration.





Gerben Dijksterhuis

Mayor of Borsele, Chair of the Group of European
Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities (GMF)

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen,

Let me begin by expressing my sincere thanks to Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the IAEA. We greatly appreciate his openness to the role of local communities in nuclear policy. Under his leadership, the IAEA has shown genuine interest in strengthening dialogue between international institutions and the places where nuclear developments actually take shape.

It is an honour to speak to you today about the importance of working together when it comes to nuclear energy, and especially the role of local communities in that process. My name is Gerben Dijksterhuis. Since 2017, I have been the Mayor of Borsele, a municipality in the southwest of the Netherlands with around 23,000 people. Borsele is home to the only nuclear power plant in the Netherlands, as well as our country's central storage facility for nuclear waste. Recently, the Dutch government selected Borsele as the preferred location for two new nuclear power plants. So, our community knows what it means to host nuclear facilities.

In addition to being mayor, I am also the President of GMF – an association of European Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities established 25 years ago. GMF brings together towns and regions that are already hosting or preparing to host nuclear projects in 16 countries across Europe. Our goal is simple: we want to make sure that the voices of local communities are heard when decisions are made about nuclear energy. Working with 16 different countries certainly comes with its challenges—ranging from cultural and linguistic differences to diverse institutional contexts, et cetera—but it has also proven to be incredibly enriching.

Today, I would like to share some lessons from our experience, highlight the challenges we face, and explain why cooperation is the key to success.

Why cooperation is so important

Nuclear decisions are often made by national governments, nuclear industry or international institutions. But the real impact is felt locally – in the towns and villages where people live next to these facilities. Hosting a nuclear project can bring opportunities, such as jobs and investments. But it can also bring challenges: more



traffic, pressure on housing, and long-term questions about safety and trust.

What we have learned is this: local communities must be involved from the start. Too often, people are only informed when plans are already made. This can lead to resistance, delays, or loss of trust. Local people are not just “stakeholders”. They are real partners. They know the area, they understand the local concerns, and they want to help shape the future.

Over the past 25 years, GMF has actively contributed to a wide range of European research projects such as the well-known COWAM and participated in key forums like the European Nuclear Energy Forum (ENEF). Today, GMF is proud to chair the Working Group on Public Engagement within the European Industrial Alliance on SMRs. Through these initiatives, GMF brings the voice and experiences of local communities who host nuclear facilities into broader policy and technical discussions.

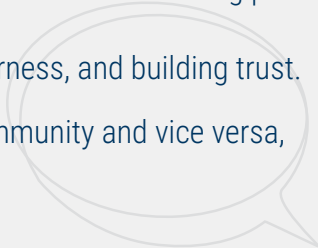
We share insights on local stakeholder engagement in areas such as the siting of radioactive waste facilities, the development of new infrastructure, and our role in emergency preparedness and response. These opportunities — not to mention the technical visits and exchanges we regularly organise — are not only valuable and inspiring for our members, but also for any stakeholder seeking to better understand the realities of living alongside nuclear technologies.

Examples of what works

In many European countries, local governments have made agreements with national authorities and project developers. These agreements often include:

- **Financial benefits:** annual payments to the municipality, or lower energy costs for local residents.
- **Quality of life:** investment in better roads, healthcare, schools, or cultural projects.
- **Housing and planning:** support to deal with the arrival of construction workers or new families.
- **Safety and emergency plans:** extra training and resources for local fire brigades and health services.
- **Jobs and local economy:** training programs and support for local companies.
- **Clear communication and involvement:** making sure local people are part of the decision-making process.

These kinds of agreements are not only about money. They are about respect, fairness, and building trust. When done well, they show that nuclear projects can bring value to the whole community and vice versa,





municipalities can enhance the sustainability of the nuclear project.

A global voice for local communities

I would also like to say something about the international collaboration we are part of. Thanks to the IAEA's support, we were able to build a global partnership between GMF in Europe, ECA in the United States, and CANHC in Canada. This partnership connects municipalities across continents. We learn from each other, we share our experiences, and we speak with a stronger voice together.

One example of this cooperation is the recent report developed by CANHC, with contributions from GMF. This report explores the concept and practice of host community agreements – structured arrangements that ensure fair benefit-sharing, community involvement, and local empowerment in nuclear developments. It provides practical guidance on how to design such agreements in ways that reflect the needs, values, and expectations of host communities. This is not theory – it is based on real stories from real places.

No matter where you stand on nuclear energy, one thing is clear: you always have to deal with local communities. Their support, their questions, and their ideas are essential. If you want nuclear projects to succeed, you need to take local communities seriously – and work with them, not around them.

Final thoughts

Nuclear energy can be an important part of a low-carbon future. But technology alone is not enough. We also need trust, honesty, and cooperation.

As President of GMF and on behalf of our Global Partnership, I want to reaffirm our shared commitment: to make sure that local voices are heard, that communities are respected, and that together we build a nuclear future that is safe, fair, and supported by the people who live closest to it.

Thank you for your attention.





Suzanne D'Eon

Mayor of Deep River, Vice Chair of the Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities (CANHC), Canada

Delivered on behalf of the Chair of CANHC

Good afternoon, everyone, fellow elected representatives, staff and all of the folks here at the IAEA that have worked so hard to put this session together.

I am Adrian Foster, I am the Mayor of the Municipality of Clarington, in Ontario, Canada. My municipality is the host to four reactors, a tritium removal facility, isotope production, a near surface low level waste facility and a new nuclear project of four small modular reactors, the first of which is under construction now.


I am also the Chair of the Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities (CANHC), which I am going to speak about. I am joined by fellow mayors and members of CANHC Kim Baigrie, Kenneth Craig, Sue Deon, Glenn Doncaster and David Pickles.

It is an honor to speak with you today. The Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities is a key organization shaping Canada's nuclear energy future. As nations increasingly embrace nuclear power as a sustainable energy solution, the role of host communities has never been more crucial. Strong engagement and informed collaboration ensure that these communities remain at the heart of Canada's clean energy transition.

Our members – experienced nuclear hosts – bring and share invaluable expertise and leadership, guiding potential host communities toward becoming informed and confident partners in nuclear energy development. This is important because, simply put, without willing host communities, there is no nuclear renaissance.

The Canadian Association of Nuclear Host Communities (CANHC) is a not-for-profit organization representing municipalities that currently host or are considering hosting nuclear facilities. As a vital bridge between the nuclear industry, regulatory bodies, and upper-tier governments, CANHC ensures that communities have a strong, informed voice in nuclear-related decisions that shape their future.

We advocate for the interests of our members, promoting safety, sustainable development, and economic benefits. Our organization represents municipalities across Canada that host existing and proposed nuclear power plants, research reactors, waste management sites and fuel processing sites.



Nuclear Host Communities play a critical role. Nuclear energy is a cornerstone of Canada's energy strategy, providing approximately 15% of Canada's electrical power needs. Host communities enable this production, allowing for affordable, dependable, and clean energy. Additionally, they serve as the foundation of Canada's nuclear and isotope supply chain, supporting approximately 80,000 jobs and generating billions in GDP. As stated earlier, without willing host communities, there is no nuclear industry. In Canada's case, a key part of our national energy strategy would be entirely missing.

CANHC's role is to help. Hosting a nuclear facility presents both challenges and opportunities. Most nuclear host communities in Canada are small and lack the resources to build the expertise needed to address complex nuclear issues. CANHC helps its members navigate these challenges and maximize opportunities by:

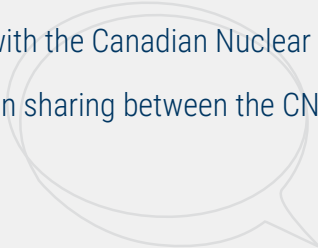
Advocating: There is no natural advocate for nuclear communities in Canada. While the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission is recognized as a global leader in safety and regulation, its mandate focuses solely on human and environmental health and safety, leaving socio-economic concerns unaddressed. Additionally, in cases where nuclear plants are state-owned, host communities find themselves competing for resources with the same governments that own the facilities.

Securing Resources: In Canada, funding is available for individuals and groups to intervene in public hearings, yet municipalities cannot access these funds. As a not-for-profit, CANHC can secure intervenor funding on behalf of communities, enabling them to engage professional expertise for fact-based decision-making.

Driving Economic Development: CANHC recently signed an agreement with the Organization of Canadian Nuclear Industries to connect local businesses with Canada's nuclear supply chain, empowering small, local enterprises to participate in the economic opportunities created by new nuclear developments.

Providing Educational Resources: The University Network of Excellence in Nuclear Engineering (UNENE) is a network of Canadian and partner international universities offering nuclear expertise. CANHC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with UNENE which gives our members access to respected academic institutions. This initiative supports both decision-makers and the public in understanding the nuclear industry and combating misinformation.

Recently, CANHC has signed an arrangement for collaboration and co-operation with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC) to ensure that lines of communication and information sharing between the CNSC and CANHC are open and accessible.





We concluded studies that look at Canadian and European Nuclear Host Community Agreements. Those studies will be used to try to identify best practices. Fair and reasonable host community agreements will be needed to facilitate the significant increases in deployment of nuclear energy that is anticipated.

As well, we commissioned a survey of local decision makers from Canadian Host communities to gain an understanding of their familiarity with the nuclear file and the capacity of local governments to deal with the complex issues that arise from hosting the nuclear industry. This was needed to understand, in part, the needs of local government.

While CANHC primarily serves Canadian municipalities, its work has international implications. Countries exploring nuclear energy can learn of CANHC's approach to community engagement, economic partnerships, and education and workforce development.

We participate in international discussions, gaining and sharing valuable insights with global stakeholders at IAEA sessions like this, as well as at conferences hosted by the ECA from the United States and GMF, the European alliance. CANHC is a founding member of the **Global Partnership**, a collaborative network of nuclear host community associations that now includes Korea and Argentina.

By fostering local engagement, driving economic development, and supporting education, CANHC exemplifies a sustainable and responsible approach to nuclear energy.

I do thank you for your time, if you have questions, please find me and ask or, please, send an email to mayor@clarington.net.

Again, thank you.





Huang Mingquan

Director General of Department of System
Engineering of CAEA and Representative of the
Nuclear Community, China

Distinguished Director - General Grossi, mayors, experts, ladies and gentlemen,


Good afternoon! It is a great pleasure to attend this event, "Nuclear Communities and Mayors in Focus", to discuss with you the important topic of "Nuclear Power Stakeholder Collaboration and Community Development".

The Chinese government regards nuclear energy as an important option for addressing climate change, building a new energy system, and achieving the goals of carbon peaking and carbon neutrality, with policies and measures formulated and implemented for active, safe and orderly development of nuclear power.

To date, China has 58 nuclear power units in operation and 54 units approved or under construction, making it the country with the largest scale of units under construction and fastest growth in nuclear energy for many consecutive years. The Chinese government adheres to a people-centered development philosophy, consistently treating stakeholder engagement and public communication for nuclear power as an important practice to modernize national governance. We have established a new paradigm of nuclear energy governance characterized by "government leadership, corporate responsibility, social collaboration, and public participation." Next, let me share three experiences from the government's perspective:

ONE: Building a Full-Cycle Policy System to Strengthen the Institutional Foundation for Public Trust

The lifeline of nuclear energy lies in safety, and the cornerstone of safety is transparency. The Chinese government promotes the modernization of nuclear power governance through legal and standardized measures. **First, transparency mandated by law.** The Nuclear Safety Act explicitly requires nuclear power corporations to disclose key information such as operational incidents and radiation monitoring. We have established 1,835 environmental radiation monitoring stations across the country, with real-time data openly available on government websites. **Second, practices guided by standards.** Multiple departments jointly issued the *Guidelines for Public Communication in Nuclear Power Projects*, creating a "four-in-one" mechanism that includes targeted public outreach, institutionalized public participation, normalized information disclosure,



and intelligent public opinion management. **Third, innovative integration fostered by policies.** We implement a “six-in-one” integration strategy that combines planning, economy, industry, ecology, culture, and community, embedding nuclear power projects deeply into local development. For example, the Fuqing Nuclear Power Plant in Fujian Province collaborated with the local government to establish a “Nuclear Power-Related Industrial Park,” which upgraded local aquaculture technology. By 2024, the per capita income of local residents had increased by 213% compared to before the plant was put into operation.

TWO: Implementing a Targeted Participation Strategy to Create a Multi-Stakeholder Governance Model

We adopt classified management based on stakeholder characteristics, shifting from “one-way notification” to “two-way empowerment.” We encourage nuclear power corporations to do the following:

First, build a community of shared interests with local governments. Mechanisms such as tax revenue sharing, employment quotas, and local procurement ensure shared benefits. For instance, Haiyan County in Zhejiang Province signed an *Integrated Development Agreement* with Qinshan Nuclear Power Plant, stipulating that 30% of maintenance services be contracted to local enterprises, creating 12,000 jobs in cumulative terms.

Second, establish emotional bonds with neighboring communities. We promote **three approaches**: listening to public concerns with sincerity through regular community tea sessions; demonstrating technologies via public open days at nuclear power plants; and safeguarding rights of the public through pilot projects like community development funds. For example, the Tianwan Nuclear Power Plant in Jiangsu Province partnered with the local government to create a “Nuclear Power Benefit Card,” with which residents can enjoy special subsidies for healthcare, education, etc.

Third, tailor communication plans for specific groups. For young people, we launched the “Nuclear Energy Science Outreach Program on Campus”, and developed VR products like virtual nuclear power plants and the animation IP **Nuclear Treasure Family**. For opinion leaders, we established expert think tanks and invited media representatives to participate in safety reviews. The “Glow of Charm” nuclear science outreach event has been held for 13 consecutive years, training 36,000 “Young Nuclear Energy Ambassadors.”

THREE: Innovating Technology-driven Tools to Break Through Barriers of Communication with the Public

Facing the dual challenges of information overload and cognitive bias, China has explored three solutions.

First, digital empowerment of communication. Partnering with the nuclear energy industry's association, we



launched a mobile app, “Nuclear Energy Science Popularization”, where users earn points by answering questions and exchange them for cultural products, which increased user retention by 40%. A nuclear power corporation created a VR platform, “Virtual Nuclear Power Plant”, enabling 5 million people to experience nuclear safety barriers as if they were on site. **Second, data-driven risk control.** We developed a “public sentiment heat model” to provide real-time alerts for sensitive terms on social media. In 2024, in a public opinion incident concerning a new project, authoritative explanations were released within two hours via the government-enterprise joint response mechanism, quickly dispelling the misunderstandings. **Third, credibility enhancement through international engagement.** China has invited the IAEA to conduct nuclear safety reviews for 12 consecutive years and launched the “Belt and Road” Nuclear Energy Communication Alliance in 2024 to promote cross-border experience sharing.

Dear colleagues and mayors,

The sustainable development of nuclear energy requires not only the fission energy of uranium atoms but also the fusion of social trust. Every candid conversation lays another cornerstone of trust for nuclear energy. Every thoughtful science outreach effort lights a lamp of understanding for the future. China stands ready to work with the international community to foster consensus through openness and win trust through transparency, so that the light of nuclear energy can warm the community with a shared future for humankind.

Thank you!





Zoltán Szalonna

Mayor of Véménd, Social Oversight and Information
Association (TETT), Hungary

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you on behalf of the Social Oversight and Information Association (TETT) from Hungary.

Established in 1997, our association brings together eight cities and villages – Bátaapáti, Bátaszék, Cikó, Feked, Mórág, Mőcsény, Ófalu, and Véménd – with the aim of providing accurate and up-to-date information to the public regarding the construction of the low- and intermediate-level radioactive waste repository in Bátaapáti.

Feedback from everyday conversations and public opinion surveys alike suggests that we are on the right track. Residents are well informed about the National Radioactive Waste Repository (NRHT) in Bátaapáti, support its operation, and understand that the facility poses no threat to our environment.

We are proud that Bátaapáti, in cooperation with surrounding municipalities, has contributed to solving a significant national issue for Hungary by hosting the repository. Should you travel to Hungary, we warmly invite you to visit Bátaapáti and explore the National Radioactive Waste Repository – an internationally recognized facility that serves as a global model. We would be delighted to see you around!

Both in the short and long term, our association is committed to continuing value-driven work based on open and ongoing dialogue. Alongside my fellow mayors, we believe that improving the quality of life for our residents must remain our guiding principle. Our efforts are supported by resources from the Central Nuclear Financial Fund, and our responsibilities are governed by a cooperation agreement with the Ministry of Energy. We are working diligently within the association and across our member municipalities to achieve our goals. We are deeply grateful to all those who support us in this mission.

The lives of the eight municipalities are closely connected to TETT and its undertakings. All members regard recent feedback as a success, reaffirming that our association – now comprising eight municipalities and working in close collaboration with RHK Ltd. and the Ministry of Energy – is fulfilling its mission effectively and efficiently. This is evident not only from biennial surveys but also from daily community interactions.



waste and engaging in public outreach, will continue to be a reliable partner for the professional community. Together, we strive to ensure that residents of the region are well-informed about this internationally acknowledged and closely observed project. We look forward to continuing our efforts in this important work, just as we have done throughout the preparatory phases in recent years.





Liudmila Danilova

Vice President of the “Association of Indigenous Peoples of Chukotka”, Russian Federation

Амын етык тумгытури! (Greeting in the Chukchi language)

Дорова дядбу! (Greeting in the Even language)

Куякамси камакюси! (Greeting in the Eskimo language)

This is how my fellow countrymen in Chukotka greet each other.

My name is Lyudmila Danilova. I was born and raised on the banks of the glorious Omolon River – in Western Chukotka (in both the Chukchi and Russian languages). It is a land where winter temperatures can drop to minus 60 degrees Celsius and rise to plus 35 in summer. A land of reindeer, snowy expanses, ancient legends, and people whose spirit is as strong and radiant as the polar day.

We are the people of the Northern Lights – people who know how to live in harmony with both nature and progress.

A well-known countryman, writer Yuri Rytkeu, describes the journey Chukotka has taken – from a seal oil lamp to nuclear energy, from an icy desert to modern cities.

But most importantly, he writes about the people who made this transformation possible. For us, the people of the Arctic, the peaceful atom means warmth and light in our homes, and a secure future for our children.

Nowadays, Chukotka's economy is growing not only thanks to the mining industry and traditional livelihoods, but also due to large-scale investment projects. And we see how investment in energy is becoming a driving force for the entire region.

For more than half a century, the Bilibino Nuclear Power Plant has remained the energy heart of the district. It is not just an industrial facility – it is a part of our life. In the central square of the city, for more than thirty years, we've had an electronic board that displays the time, temperature, and radiation level every day. We know how to live with the atom – in peace and with trust.

We are raising a new generation – one that can think critically, invent boldly, and is unafraid of the future. In 2016, the State Atomic Energy Corporation Rosatom initiated the “Atom Class.” It is not just a physics



classroom – it is modern equipment, laboratories, like-minded teams, and, most importantly, belief in oneself and in science. When children enter the Atom Class, they are not just learning formulas. They are learning to be part of a team, to take responsibility, to be brave, to ask questions, and to seek answers. The Atom Class is not just about education – it is about dreams and the path towards them.

Today, Bilibino NPP is preparing for a new stage – decommissioning. But this is not the end; it is the beginning of new opportunities. The plant opens its doors to schoolchildren, students, and visitors. Experienced instructors lead tours and share knowledge – because knowledge breeds respect for technology, and respect leads to responsibility.

As one chapter ends, a new one begins. Since 2020, Chukotka has been home to a unique facility – the world's first floating nuclear power unit "Akademik Lomonosov". Based on nuclear-powered shipbuilding technologies. It does more than just replace the aging capacities of the Bilibino NPP and Chaun TPP, which is very seventy-year-old. It provides industry and residents what they need most – stability, energy, and new opportunities.

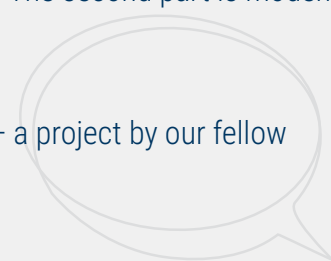
An essential part of life is healthcare. The medical and sanitary units of the Federal Medical and Biological Agency in Bilibino and Pevek serve all residents. We are especially proud of today's Chief medical officer is a native of our region and a representative of the indigenous peoples – Alexander Kanyukov.

The NPP also supports other social initiatives that are important to us. What does this look like in practice? With financial support from Bilibino NPP, our museum features a robot guide – it will take you through the exhibits, tell stories, and bring displays to life.

In 2022, also with support from the plant, we organized folklore expeditions to Omolon and Ilirnei. We collected fairy tales, stories, and toponyms, and spoke with elders. These voices from the past are now being prepared for publication, so that our children never forget their roots.

Another project we are especially proud of is the Nunalikhtak Ethnopark in Egvekinot. Its name translates as "Owner of the Land." With Rosatom's direct involvement, we brought to life a vision that bridges history and modernity. One part of the park is historical: a reconstruction of a sea-hunters' settlement with Eskimo dwellings and whale jawbone racks for storing authentic Chukchi leather kayaks. The second part is modern: a visitor center, walking trails – a place you want to return to.

The park also became the stage for the feature film "The Legend of the Ermine" – a project by our fellow





countryman, a Nika Award-winning film, director Alexey Vakhrushev. The characters speak their native languages. And to help audience understand them, we created a mobile app to learn the Chukchi and Eskimo languages. Thus, the film sparked a revival of language. It also inspired the launch of a traditional clothing workshop. The costumes are not made just for the film — they are also ordered by local residents and visitors. This is how one project inspires another, and together they breathe new life into our culture, strengthen our economy, and promote tourism.

Today, Chukotka is no longer the edge of the world — it is a land of opportunity. We learn strength from nature, resilience from tradition, adaptability and progress from technology. And we keep moving forward.

Welcome to the Arctic! Welcome to Chukotka!

Thank you for your attention!

Атав. Нымэльэв. (Chukchi: Goodbye. All the best!)





D. Juan Pedro Sánchez

Mayor of Yebra, President of the Association of
Municipalities in Nuclear Areas (AMAC), Spain

Good afternoon,

I would like to express my sincerest gratitude to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), especially to its Director General, Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, and his entire team for the invitation and for giving us the valuable opportunity to participate in this important event. My name is Juan Pedro Sánchez, Mayor of Yebra, a small municipality of 500 inhabitants located next to the first nuclear power plant that began operation in Spain, in 1968. I also have the honor of serving as the President of AMAC.

What is AMAC?

AMAC is the Spanish Association of Municipalities in Areas with Nuclear Power Plants and Radioactive Waste Storage. It is made up of 60 municipalities located within a 10-kilometer radius of nuclear facilities. AMAC was founded in 1988 with the primary objective of ensuring the **safety of the populations** living closest to nuclear installations.

AMAC has been a pioneer in fostering relationships among nuclear municipalities across various European countries, allowing for shared experiences, meetings, and activities that have brought us closer to European institutions. AMAC was and continues to be a driving force and co-founder of the **Group of European Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities (GMF)**.

Principles and Objectives

Safety: Monitoring the operation of nuclear facilities, promoting effective emergency plans, and maintaining ongoing collaboration with the Nuclear Safety Council (CSN) and the General Directorate of Civil Protection and Emergencies.

Information and Transparency: Promoting the establishment of Local Information Committees (CLI's), ensuring public access to relevant information about nuclear facilities.

Citizen Participation: Encouraging active involvement of municipalities in decision-making processes.

Safe Waste Management: AMAC has played a key role in defining a responsible strategy for managing



radioactive waste. Municipalities have consistently demanded that high-level radioactive waste be stored permanently in a deep geological repository (DGR).

Economic Development: Promoting alternative economic activities to those of nuclear power plants by supporting investments in other industrial sectors, agriculture, tourism, and services.

Key Milestones in AMAC's History

AMAC began its activity in 1988 by demanding that the State implement **real and effective nuclear emergency plans**, which were non-existent even though all Spanish nuclear power plants were already in operation.

In 1989, just one year after its creation, AMAC succeeded in getting the State to approve the **Basic Nuclear Emergency Plan and the Provincial Emergency Plans**.

In 1999, important public information mechanisms were established through the creation of the **Local Information Committees (CLI's)**.

Municipalities participated in defining the processes for **selecting sites** for high-level radioactive waste storage.


AMAC is officially recognized at the state level as the **representative body of nuclear municipalities**, and its views are taken into account in decision-making processes.

Current Objectives and Future Action Lines

Our main objective is to defend **the future of residents** in areas with nuclear facilities and to delay the closure of nuclear power plants, while also working to minimize the negative impacts when closures do occur. In parallel, we continue to work on:

- The improvement and effective implementation of **nuclear emergency plans**.
- **Information and training policies** for citizens, with special focus on school-aged populations and local public officials.
- Monitoring the **7th General Radioactive Waste Plan**, which includes the construction of new waste storage facilities at nuclear plants and the expansion of medium and low-level waste storage at the **El Cabril facility in Hornachuelos (Córdoba)**.
- Participation in Local Information Committees in nuclear areas.



- 
- Attendance at **European and international conferences**, seminars, and meetings to expand knowledge and learn new development and management approaches.

Current Situation and AMAC's Position

Currently, in Spain there are **three nuclear power plants closed** and **five in operation**, with **seven reactors** functioning. The national plan outlines a **gradual closure** of all plants between **2027 and 2035**.

AMAC **opposes** this closure schedule because we believe there are currently **no technical, environmental, or strategic reasons** to justify shutting down the plants. We interpret this decision as being driven solely by **ideological criteria**, without a proper evaluation of the **economic impact, loss of technology and qualified jobs, electrical system stability, avoided CO₂ emissions**, and – very importantly – the changing international context.


The association advocates that nuclear power plants should continue operating **as long as they meet the highest standards** of nuclear safety and radiological protection.

Nuclear municipalities also **strongly support renewable energy**. They are promoting the **installation and development** of renewables within their territories and believe that, alongside nuclear energy, these sources should form part of the **energy mix** to help decarbonize the planet.

Final Remarks

AMAC represents the **voice of nuclear municipalities in Spain**, working for over three decades to ensure safety, participation, and alternative development in nuclear areas. AMAC has proven to be a **key player** in the management of the nuclear environment in Spain – not only in safety matters, but also in socioeconomic development, citizen information, waste management, and democratic participation.

In light of the uncertainty surrounding the planned shutdown of all Spanish nuclear power plants, the association reaffirms its **commitment to defending the future** of nuclear municipalities. We believe that there are **no valid technical, environmental, or strategic reasons** supporting their closure, and we demand that any decision made on this issue be in the **public interest** and not based on **ideological positions**. At this critical time, we reaffirm our **commitment to the future** of nuclear territories – either through the **responsible continuation** of nuclear energy or by **managing the transition with justice and efficiency**.



Thank you very much.



David Moore

Chair of the Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum (Nuleaf),
United Kingdom

Background

- Founded in 2005 in response to the NDA being established – 20th Anniversary this year.
- Our Membership is around 100 local authorities. And we are a Special Interest Group of the LGA.
- Cover England and Wales but have recently taken over Secretariate for SCCORS in Scotland.
- Funding by members and NDA Group.
- Sit on a wide range of Government and industry groups. Hold regular member meetings.
- Strong links – GMF Europe, Global Partnership of Nuclear Communities with USA/Canada/Others.

Work areas

- Decontamination of sites, lifetime plans and future use.
- Promoting the best economic, social and environmental outcomes e.g. community benefits, skills, supply chain, biodiversity.

Drivers

- Legal requirement on NDA to engage through Energy Act 2004.
- Local authorities the democratic voices of communities – and have regulatory functions such as planning.

Challenges

- Focus on decommissioning and waste – also have NNLAG.
- Unusual to have 2 bodies covering parts of the nuclear cycle – discussions on how we could work more closely have taken place as in many councils same Members/Officers cover decom and new build.
- Funding – pressure on NDA and local authority budgets – we could do more with more.
- Political dimension – many challenges for nuclear are political not technical – but technical nuclear organisations not good at working in political space.



Benefits

- Act with one voice – clear asks of Government and Industry
- Support for capacity building in individual councils – many don't have their own staff resources to deal with nuclear

Successes

- Engagement – Have ensured that role of local government is recognized in Government and NDA Strategies and practice. Nuleaf meeting a forum for feedback. Individual councils would not have the same impact of working separately.
- GDF – convene meetings of councils involved in process. Opportunity to share experiences of engagement with NWS and wider community. Positive and collaborative working.
- Will publish new research on engagement in the near future that suggests new ways of working, learning from international experience. One example is Community Hosting Agreements. Also promoting new ways of working with communities.
- Socioeconomics. Have influenced NDA Strategy. Pushing for Community Benefits protocol and Community Hosting Agreements that could provide better outcomes for host communities.





Rebecca Casper

Vice President of the Energy Communities Alliance (ECA),
Mayor of the City of Idaho Falls, United States of America

I am honored to stand before you today to speak about the Energy Communities Alliance, or ECA. We are a non-profit organization in the United States that brings together local governments hosting nuclear energy facilities that are adjacent to, or otherwise physically impacted by, the U.S. government and other nuclear facilities.

I am Mayor Rebecca Casper of the city of Idaho Falls, Idaho. I serve as Vice-Chair of ECA, and I am proud to represent ECA, in our commitment to ensuring that local governments are actively engaged in decision-making processes that impact them.

Our mission is to share information, establish policy positions, and ensure that the environmental, safety, health, and economic priorities of local governments are considered as national-level nuclear energy policy is developed in the United States.

There is an excitement in our communities and a lot of new economic activity regarding new nuclear development. Our communities are hosting nuclear manufacturing, nuclear fuel, and potential new advanced reactors of all sizes.

Our community experience with nuclear, workforce and workforce training and our access to large power corridors are attracting businesses. We are also seeing large energy users such as data centers wanting to locate near these projects.

Last month, my community hosted a large national ECA conference called the **ECA Forum**. This annual event is the cornerstone of our efforts to engage communities in new nuclear development, bringing together nuclear energy developers, local communities, federal government representatives, academics, NGOs, stakeholders, utilities, data center developers, tribes, and others. With support from the U.S. Department of Energy Office of Nuclear Energy, we host this conference to highlight topics related to advanced nuclear energy development.

One of the more popular features of the Forum is a training **called** "Nuclear 101." This features nuclear experts teaching complex nuclear science to participants in a classroom-style setting. The subject matter ranges from advanced reactor technologies and fuels to the nuclear fuel cycle, to other "essentials" designed to help a



non-expert navigate the nuclear landscape more effectively.

The ECA Forum is just one part of ECA's broader **New Nuclear Initiative**, which focuses on providing local governments with the resources and information they will need to build support and attract new nuclear development into their communities. We address key questions such as what communities need to know, and how to communicate with industry and government. We seek to prepare local leaders for the challenges they may face as they seek to host nuclear facilities. This includes providing background on cost, financing and other risks associated with first-of-a-kind (FOAK) technologies.

ECA also focuses on the back-end of the nuclear fuel cycle and hosts a 750-person national conference each year focused on addressing the wastes created by past nuclear projects in the U.S. ECA also assists communities as they explore what strategies to pursue if there is interest in hosting spent nuclear fuel (SNF) and high-level waste (HLW) storage sites. ECA also provides communities with background about the agreements that current SNF and HLW sites may have in place. And most recently in partnership with IAEA, ECA recently has begun hosting webinars for our members featuring successful DGR projects from across the world.

ECA also provides financial and technical resources, including additional educational webinars, advocacy strategies, and other technical assistance. Our goal is to facilitate interaction across sectors and to develop a shared understanding of the outlook for developing nuclear technologies, national energy security considerations and supply chain impacts and opportunities – all with a focus on community.

On a global scale, ECA is a key partner in the new **Global Partnership of Municipalities with Nuclear Facilities**, you have already heard about. We value the partnership and cooperation we have established with the European, Canadian, Argentinian, and South Korean Municipalities that host nuclear facilities.

The Global Partnership's mission is to allow municipalities to realize the as-yet untapped potential of international collaboration. We believe in the power of our shared purpose. Working side-by-side with similar municipal organizations worldwide, we will amplify the message we all agree is paramount – *which is that the municipalities that host nuclear facilities must have a voice and play an active role in the relevant nuclear policy conversations and decisions that impact them and their citizens.*



In summary, ECA is dedicated to empowering local governments and communities in the nuclear sector. We strive to share information, educate, advocate, and collaborate to ensure that our communities are well-equipped to benefit from the nuclear facilities they host.

We express our sincere gratitude for the opportunity to participate in this first IAEA Stakeholder Conference and look forward to ongoing international collaboration.





Statements from Mayors and Local Representatives



Celso Jaque

Mayor of Malargüe, Argentina



Ladies and gentlemen, distinguished colleagues,

It is a great honor to speak on behalf of the Municipality of Malargüe, in Mendoza, Argentina – a community that has turned an environmental challenge into a symbol of transformation and public value. Between 1954 and 1986, our city hosted a uranium processing facility that left behind radioactive tailings. For decades, these tailings posed risks to our health and environment, affecting local soil, water, and agriculture.

With the support of the World Bank and national agencies, we implemented a comprehensive environmental remediation. Through an engineered encapsulation process – involving multiple protective layers – the site was secured against contamination. Today, that same location is El Mirador Park, a public space with walking trails, sports facilities, and green areas, open to all our citizens.

This project is more than a technical success. It represents community engagement, environmental justice, and the will to repair and reclaim. It also taught us that transparency and inclusion – even when met with initial resistance – are key to legitimacy and long-term trust.

Malargüe's experience proves that remediation can build public confidence in nuclear legacy management. But it also affirms something deeper: that host communities deserve to be heard, respected, and included in decisions that affect their future.

As members of the newly formed Forum of Nuclear Municipalities of Argentina, we advocate for a stronger voice for local governments in national and international nuclear policy.

We believe that sustainable nuclear development must include the communities that host its infrastructure – not only as stakeholders, but as full partners in shaping its future.

Thank you very much.





Marcelo Matzkin

Mayor of Zárate, Argentina



Today, I want to share with you a vision that represents a true opportunity for transformation in our municipalities. An opportunity that goes far beyond energy: the arrival of a nuclear power plant.

I know that, for many, it may sound technical or distant. But let me be clear: a nuclear power plant is not just a source of energy. It is a source of jobs, development, and real progress for our communities.

We're talking about thousands of skilled, stable, and well-paid jobs. About training opportunities for young people, for technicians, for professionals. We're talking about revitalizing the local economy, giving a new boost to commerce, hospitality, transportation, construction, and services.

It's a transformation that reaches every corner of the municipality.

But we also know that this growth, in order to be positive and sustainable, must be accompanied from day one by investment in infrastructure and public services. There can be no real development without proper roads, accessible transportation, digital connectivity, healthcare access, clean water, sanitation, waste collection, and safe streets. The nuclear power plant should not be an island within the city; it must be part of the city. There can be no nuclear city without a city that is ready.

If growth is not orderly, if infrastructure doesn't keep up, the opportunity can turn into conflict. And that is what we must avoid. We must ensure that economic growth also means social growth. Moreover, the world now recognizes what once was debated: Modern nuclear plants meet the highest international safety standards, they emit no greenhouse gases, and they are a key part of the solution to climate change.

That is why I say firmly: the time is now.

Because hosting a nuclear power plant is much more than producing energy. It's a commitment to a development model based on jobs, innovation, and opportunity for all. But that commitment must also include a promise to improve the quality of life for the entire community. I am convinced that we are at a turning point.

If we do this right — together, with institutions, companies, and municipalities - it can mark the beginning of a deep and positive transformation for our cities and our people.



Mario Rivarola

Mayor, Municipality of Embalse, Argentina



Ladies and gentlemen, authorities, colleagues:

It is a great honor to represent the Municipality of Embalse, in the Province of Córdoba, Argentine Republic, at this International Conference convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Embalse is a community with deep historical ties to the development of nuclear energy in our country. For over four decades, it has hosted one of Argentina's three nuclear power plants.

Commissioned in 1984, our plant successfully completed its life extension process just a few years ago. This major technical milestone was not only a strategic achievement for our national energy system but also a valuable opportunity to strengthen and deepen the relationships between the nuclear industry, the national government, and our local community.

We understand that projects of this scale do more than upgrade infrastructure – they transform territories, shape local economies, and challenge us to reflect on how we engage as a society. From this transformation arise critical questions:

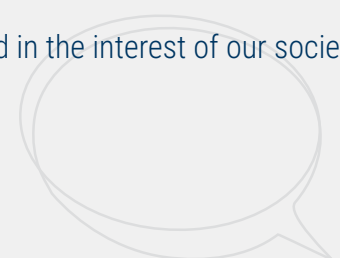
How do we communicate what we do?

How do we build trust?

How do we involve citizens in a process that affects – and includes – them?

In Embalse, we have chosen to take an active role. We promote open dialogue, support technical training for young people, encourage skilled employment at the local level, and work closely with the plant operator, the regulator, and other nuclear institutions to foster what we understand as a dynamic, sustainable, and legitimate social license.

Transparent, continuous communication with the nuclear operator has become essential. As a local government, we believe this relationship must be nurtured with responsibility and in the interest of our society as a whole.





We are not walking this path alone. Our municipality is part of the Forum of Nuclear Municipalities of Argentina, a federal initiative launched this year that brings together mayors from communities where various stages of the nuclear fuel cycle are present. This collaborative platform enables us to share experiences, align strategies, and present a unified voice in decisions that directly affect our territories.

We are convinced that the future of nuclear energy depends not only on technological excellence but also on its capacity to build strong, enduring, and transparent relationships with the communities that support it.

The invitation we have received from the IAEA – to participate, for the first time, in this Conference – represents a meaningful recognition of the importance of local voices and the vital role municipal governments play in the governance of the nuclear sector. At the same time, it presents a unique opportunity to strengthen institutional relationships that benefit us all.

From Embalse, we reaffirm our commitment to a participatory, inclusive model of nuclear governance – firmly rooted in the principles of sustainable development.

Thank you very much.





Subir Kumra Das

Upazila Nirbahi Officer, Pabna District, Bangladesh




The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant (RNPP) is the first-ever nuclear power plant in Bangladesh, marking a significant milestone in the country's pursuit of sustainable energy development. Situated on the bank of the river Padma in the Ishwardi upazila of Pabna district. This mega infrastructure project stands as a symbol of progress, clean energy, and technological advancement for the nation. This plant will produce 2,400 megawatts of electricity when fully operational. It will help solve the problem of electricity shortages, which has slowed down industry and progress for many years. With more stable electricity, factories can run better, businesses can grow, and people will enjoy a better quality of life.

At a time when the world is grappling with the adverse effects of climate change and global warming, the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant offers a promising solution by ensuring the generation of clean, safe, and reliable energy. As a source of carbon-free electricity, it is expected to play a vital role in reducing Bangladesh's dependence on fossil fuels and cutting down greenhouse gas emissions.

Beyond its environmental significance, the socio-economic impact of the Rooppur NPP on the surrounding locality is profound. The project has already created numerous employment opportunities, particularly during its construction phase, engaging hundreds of local workers and skilled personnel. The influx of workers and professionals has stimulated the local economy, giving rise to various businesses, industries, and service sectors seeking to benefit from the large-scale investment in the area. Additionally, due to the bilateral agreement with the Russian Federation, a significant number of foreign experts and engineers are currently residing in the Ishwardi region. This has fostered a multicultural environment, promoting cultural exchange and social development within the local community.

Infrastructural development has also accelerated around the project site. Modern shopping malls, super shops, and markets are being established to cater to the growing population and their diverse needs. Health care facilities have expanded, with new clinics and hospitals being constructed. Notably, the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Commission (BAEC) has recently established a nuclear medicine-based hospital, INMAS (Institute of Nuclear Medicine and Allied Sciences), in the Pabna district, specifically targeting the healthcare needs of those associated with the Rooppur NPP.



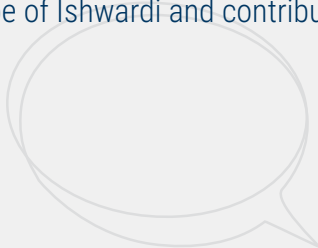
Educational infrastructure is also witnessing significant growth, with the development of new schools and institutions to accommodate the increasing demand for quality education in the area. Furthermore, residential buildings, press structures, and various public facilities are being constructed, transforming the region into a thriving and modern locality.

Rooppur's construction has significantly improved regional infrastructure, including roads, hospitals, educational institutions, and communication systems. These advancements have elevated the quality of life for thousands of residents in Pabna district and beyond. The project also plays a role in promoting gender equality, with increased participation of women in technical and leadership roles in the nuclear industry.

Local governments and communities are central to the successful integration of nuclear energy projects. Their active participation ensures that nuclear facilities are developed with public support, transparency, and consideration of local needs and values. Local authorities are integral to the decision-making processes regarding nuclear facilities. Ishwardi municipality establishing open dialogues with residents to address concerns and provide information about nuclear projects. Collaborating with nuclear operators to ensure that local infrastructure can support the demands of nuclear facilities, as seen in Lima, Argentina, where the mayor works with plant operators to address urban growth challenges.

Local communities are not passive recipients but active participants in nuclear energy decisions. My municipality is increasingly involved in the collaboration of nuclear energy facilities through consent-based processes. Understanding local cultures and communication norms is crucial. Ishwardi municipality emphasizes contextual analysis to ensure effective community engagement. Providing communities with knowledge about nuclear energy and waste management fosters informed decision-making. The International Atomic Energy Agency supports such initiatives globally.

The Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is not just a power station, it is a symbol of progress, science, and international friendship. It shows the world that Bangladesh is ready to use peaceful nuclear energy to build a brighter future. In summary, the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant is not merely an energy project – it is a catalyst for socio-economic transformation. From environmental benefits to employment generation, cultural development, and infrastructural expansion, the project is reshaping the landscape of Ishwardi and contributing to the broader progress of Bangladesh.





Mohammad Mofizul Islam

Deputy Commissioner, Pabna District, Bangladesh



I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) for inviting me to the inaugural IAEA International Conference on Stakeholder Engagement for Nuclear Power Programmes. It is an honour to share our experience of hosting Bangladesh's first nuclear power facility – the Rooppur Nuclear Power Plant.

Located in Rooppur, Ishwardi Upazila of Pabna, about 160 kilometers northwest of Dhaka, this facility represents a historic step in our country's journey toward energy independence. The plant will house two VVER-1200 pressurized water reactors, each generating 1,200 megawatts, for a total capacity of 2,400 megawatts. It is expected to be fully operational by 2026.

Implemented with Russian technical and financial support through Rosatom, over 7,500 experts from Russia and other countries are contributing to this complex, high-precision project. Since construction began in late 2017, Rooppur has brought significant infrastructure development and economic opportunities to the region.

The project strictly follows the Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Act 2012 and fully complies with IAEA standards on nuclear safety, environmental protection, and regulatory oversight. The Bangladesh Atomic Energy Regulatory Authority (BAERA) ensures consistent supervision and safety monitoring throughout the process.

As the Deputy Commissioner of Pabna and a member of the Nuclear Power Plant Project Committee, I conduct regular site visits and monitoring activities to ensure local coordination, transparency, and stakeholder engagement. Community awareness and public confidence are integral to the project's long-term success. Rooppur is more than a source of electricity – it is a national achievement that reflects our commitment to a safer, cleaner, and energy-secure future.

Thank you.





Kris Van Dijck

Mayor of Dessel, Member of the European Parliament, Belgium



For over seventy years, my municipality, Dessel, has a close bond to the nuclear sector. What began in the 1950s with the arrival of a nuclear research center in the neighboring municipality of Mol, which grew into a unique cluster of nuclear institutions with international prominence: from SCK CEN, FBFC/AREVA, and Belgonucleaire to Belgoprocess. This presence brought jobs, prosperity, and expertise.

When I became alderman in the late 1980s, the debate around nuclear waste was intensely topical. What struck me even then was our community's willingness to engage in that debate—even when nuclear energy faced pressure. We did not choose a “NIMBY” approach but rather, “Let's tackle this together.”

In the 1990s, as a small municipality, we took the lead in seeking a solution for the disposal of low-level radioactive waste. It was not an easy path. But it was the right one. Because those who benefit from nuclear applications—and we all do, from hospitals to steel construction welding inspections, from electricity supply to cancer treatment—must also dare to share responsibility for waste management.

Together with NIRAS/ONDRAF, we established a local partnership that prioritized transparency and citizen engagement. No technocratic top-down approach, but a process of listening, informing, and involving. To this day, that remains the core of our policy.

Whether you support nuclear energy or oppose it, the reality is: nuclear technology is affordable, efficient, clean, and reliable. It has a future—not just in power plants. And with proper governance, it gains public acceptance.

I am proud that my municipality takes on this responsibility. That we demonstrate how proximity and safety can go hand in hand. And that our citizens don't look away but actively contribute to the conversation.





Kimberly Baigrie

Mayor of Ignace, Canada



Good morning, everyone and thank you so much for attending today. I am honoured to be among so many other Mayors, Heads of Council and the IAEA members.

My name is Kim Baigrie, and I am the Mayor of the Township of Ignace.

We are a small community nestled in the heart of Northwestern Ontario Canada – Sunset Country; the Township of Ignace is located halfway between Thunder Bay and Kenora on the Trans Canada Highway 17 with a population of just over 1300 in Ontario Canada.

On November 28, 2024, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization in Canada, made an historic announcement regarding the placement and siting of Canada's first ever deep geological repository to store Canada's used nuclear fuel, thus completing the nuclear utilization cycle.

The Township of Ignace and the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation were chosen as that site in Canada. Thank you.

The journey began almost fifteen years ago with countless hours of learning, education and knowledge engagement with the public, the residents of Ignace and all of Northwestern Ontario.


After a lengthy journey, the residents of Ignace and Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation both provided public consent and a very strong mandate to continue to move forward with the regulation, licensing and finally construction of a deep geological repository at the Revell site, just 35 km west of Ignace, our community and on the lands of Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation.

Over 77% of the community voted in favour of becoming a willing host community and carrying forward with the NWMO DGR project.

At the early stages of this project, we really didn't know what to expect or what the project really entailed.

We knew it was a \$26 Billion Dollar development in the mining sector but 15 years ago the concept of used nuclear fuel being stored near your community was the scariest of concepts.





So, our journey began.... investment in education, learning, knowledge, access to experts and most importantly... a local centre of education called the Learn More Centre... a partnership with the Nuclear Waste Management Organization brought credibility, transparency, and accountability to the project.

Having that partner, the NWMO, at the local level to verify, provide technical expertise, including transportation of used nuclear fuel, research and investment to learning was critical from our perspective.

We conducted so much community engagement, community dialogue and most importantly... we invested in key people, consultants in advisory and communications and resources within the community.

This past year alone... in 2024 the Township of Ignace completed the following:

- In March 2024, Ignace signed an historic hosting agreement with NWMO.
- In July 2024, Ignace determined its Willingness around moving forward with this project through a deliberative democratic process.
- In November 2024, Ignace and Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation were selected as the first ever site in Canada to host a deep geological repository by the NWMO.

At this time, we want to provide our utmost appreciation, respect to the dedication of the Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation, their Chief and members, for their role, their leadership, their commitment to ensuring environmental stewardship, their patience and their friendship in also deciding to move to the next stage of this very impressive and important project for our region. We could not move forward without their participation, their friendship and their partnership.

We are looked at as trailblazers in this country from all around the world. The world is keeping a close eye on Canada and Ignace and Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation and is looking to Canada to ensure public safety, transportation, stewardship of the environment and regulations and standards that currently lead our global efforts in nuclear.

We in the Ignace and Wabigoon Lake area are at the beginning of this important cycle... we are about to enter a 7-year phase of regulatory and licensing processes that will prove, distinguish and verify the science of building and the construction of Canada's first ever deep geological repository. This is the beginning of our future!



We won't be building until the mid-2030's and we won't be receiving a bundle of used nuclear fuel until 2043. We need to take the appropriate and necessary steps to ensure safety, transportation and most importantly... environmental stewardship of the lands.

We are counting on the Nuclear Safety Commission of Canada, Impact Assessment Canada, the Nuclear Waste Management Organization and International Atomic Energy Association to verify and approve the safe and systematic construction of this DGR and the Transportation of used nuclear fuel from all over Canada to our site in Ignace/Wabigoon Lake.

The people of the Township of Ignace have always said ...

Solid Rock, Solid Science, Solid Choice... Now we are also saying Solid FUTURE. I am so pleased and honoured to be here to represent our small community in Ontario Canada. We are truly blessed to have been chosen as Canada's first ever Deep Geological Repository site and we look forward to moving forward in a very progressive manner to ensure that we are positioned to accept this project both from a social economic standpoint and from an environmental perspective. So, buckle up as the road ahead is going to be an exciting one. I invite you all to come and visit us in Canada.





Kenneth Craig

Mayor of Kincardine, Canada



Dear Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, IAEA representatives, esteemed Mayors, and honored guests.

I am grateful to represent the Municipality of Kincardine, a community located along the Lake Huron shoreline in Ontario, Canada. We are also the host community to Bruce Power, one of the world's largest operating nuclear generation sites.

A history of nuclear excellence

Kincardine is a dedicated supporter of the nuclear industry. In fact, our support dates to the early 1960s, with the construction of Canada's first commercial CANDU nuclear power plant. We have a keen sense of community pride in the nuclear industry historically, largely because of the local accomplishments passed down generationally and growing with the construction of new reactors on the site.

Nuclear power production creates thousands of good paying jobs in our small rural community. With a large percentage of our community members employed in the sector, the industry receives a high level of support and confidence in safety standards and practices. Bruce Power and their partners in the nuclear supply chain continue advancements in innovation, most recently in isotope production, earning them, and Canada, global recognition.

A growing demand for energy

As the world faces growing energy demands, Canada is turning to our region — once again — to explore the nation's first large-scale nuclear build in over three decades. Bruce Power is currently producing 30 per cent of Ontario's power in the Municipality of Kincardine, while planning their strategic growth to provide more carbon-free energy and innovative medical developments.

Our provincial and regional commitments to the clean energy produced by nuclear facilities have strategically evolved our power grid. As our community considers another large nuclear project, we welcome this opportunity for international collaboration and learning best practices from nuclear host communities.



Working together

Geography may separate us from one another, but we share interests, concerns, and wisdom. Together, we can ensure a viable and sustainable future for our communities and for the industry. We recommend that this conference not be a one-time event, but that nuclear host communities around the world meet periodically to advance our shared interests.

We also acknowledge that collaboration is crucial for the IAEA, industry, and all levels of government to better support nuclear host communities by:

- actively listening to host communities and engaging in ongoing dialogue.
- providing capacity and resources for participation in nuclear regulatory reviews.
- ensuring fair and equitable financial supports to host communities, through property taxation and host community agreements.
- establishing genuine partnerships throughout all phases of the nuclear life cycle.

The Municipality of Kincardine and other host communities can demonstrate to the world that nuclear energy, when done right, offers significant benefits for the industry, for the community, and globally. This is not only in terms of clean and reliable power, but also in fostering sustainable economic growth and strong partnerships.

Thank you.





Suzanne D'Eon

Mayor of Deep River, Canada



I'm the mayor of Deep River, Ontario, Canada's original nuclear community.

My town remains closely tied to the Canadian nuclear industry – which is at a crossroads and somewhat at *risk* from not effectively promoting itself to garner public support. The well-informed support nuclear, but what about the uninformed? A *strong social license* is crucial to the future of nuclear.

For Deep River (and all communities) to exist in 80 years, we need nuclear to stand-up and defend itself. Not be passive. Not be pushed around. Elbows Up we say in Canada!

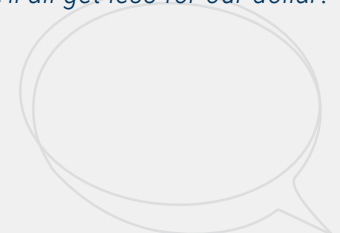
In my region there is a tenacious, anti-nuke group that expertly deploys fear and disinformation to impressive effect. They *relentlessly* seek-out and lobby groups with strong societal standing, misleading and frightening them to object to anything nuclear. Never underestimate even the smallest group of dedicated disinformation spreaders.

The nuclear industry must go on offense. Reach out to communities and move them to being well-informed, inspire them to be supporters, before the fear-mongers get there.

The planet has run out of time for people to be "*afraid*" of nuclear. We can't afford to let the uninformed become ill-informed or worse, dis-informed. Go on offence, go on the road. Schools. Communities. Counter the misinformation before it gets traction.

Elbows Up also means sending in your best players – credible people who speak in terminology the public understands. Empower them to talk science **and** talk big picture – not just *how* nuclear *safely* generates *clean* electricity, but *what* society **can do** with that clean electricity. Make it *visionary*, take *ownership* of the future utopia which nuclear offers.

Last November, I left "Nuclear Day" at Canada's Parliament to see a Canadian oil & gas company poster covering an Ottawa bus shelter. It said: "*Without a Strong Oil and Gas Industry we'll all get less for our dollar.*" Blatantly scaring the public to support oil and gas.





Its time nuclear fights back – with facts.

Oil and gas dump their waste into the atmosphere. The National Institutes of Health attributes *5.1 million excess deaths per year* to ambient air pollution from fossil fuel use.

Only 12-30% of the fuel burned in an ICE is converted into **forward** motion? The remainder turns the motor or is waste heat. Electric vehicles utilize 87-91% of energy to turn wheels. No one talks about this. Why?

As Oliver Stone said: "*What's scary is not necessarily what is dangerous. What's dangerous (coal) is not necessarily scary*".

Elbows Up means not being afraid to paint a picture that contrasts your good points against your competitors' bad points.

Nuclear needs to communicate its pride, its strengths, its story and its people.

We borrow the planet from future generations – we owe it to them to make this right.

THANK YOU!





Zheng Yuewen

Mayor of Rongcheng Municipal People's Government, Shandong Province, China



Distinguished Leaders, Guests, Ladies and Gentlemen

Good afternoon! It is a great privilege to participate in this IAEA special event and share our experiences and insights on the symbiotic development of nuclear energy and urban communities. Rongcheng City, situated at the easternmost tip of China's Shandong Peninsula, is renowned for its pleasant climate and coastal geography, being surrounded by the sea on three sides. Recognized by the United Nations as one of the most livable cities globally, Rongcheng stands out as a pioneering hub for nuclear innovation, integrating both third generation and fourth-generation nuclear power technologies. The city has plans to construct seven nuclear power units with a combined installed capacity of 8.15 million kilowatts. To date, the world's first high-temperature gas-cooled reactor nuclear power plant, along with the inaugural 1.53 million-kilowatt advanced pressurized water reactor unit, has been successfully constructed and is now in operation. This year alone, these facilities are expected to generate up to 20 billion kilowatt-hours of electricity. Today, I would like to explore Rongcheng's journey of harmonious coexistence with nuclear energy through the lens of three key themes.

The first keyword is "bridging the gap through science outreach," bringing nuclear energy into everyday life. To foster public understanding, engagement, and acceptance of nuclear energy, we have established China's largest new energy science and technology museum, featuring the most comprehensive exhibits, as well as the country's first science park dedicated to nuclear safety education. We have organized nearly 100 outreach and educational programs related to nuclear energy, welcoming over 500,000 visitors, including citizens and tourists. These efforts have facilitated direct interaction between the public and cutting-edge nuclear technologies, dismantling misconceptions about nuclear energy and promoting a shift from fear to informed support.

The second keyword is "energy innovation," harnessing nuclear energy to warm an entire city. To extend the benefits of nuclear energy to more ordinary citizens, we have launched the world's first high-temperature gas-



cooled reactor nuclear heating project, delivering green and zero-carbon heating to 190,000 square meters of residential buildings across 1,850 households in the local area. Additionally, we have invested 700 million yuan to construct a 35.6-kilometer long-distance pipeline network. This year, we aim to achieve coverage of nuclear heating across 6.75 million square meters in the central urban area, which is projected to reduce annual standard coal consumption by 127,000 tons and carbon dioxide emissions by 350,000 tons – equivalent to planting 20,000 hectares of forest. Currently, we are actively advancing the development of a near-zero carbon city, establishing a “zero-carbon heating demonstration zone” and offering replicable clean heating solutions for other cities.

The third keyword is “full-chain integration,” focusing on the establishment of a world-class nuclear energy industrial demonstration base. The Rongcheng Shidao Bay Nuclear Power Base, with a total investment exceeding 100 billion yuan, integrates four types of reactors, including high-temperature gas-cooled reactors and advanced pressurized water reactors. Once all seven units are fully operational, the annual power generation capacity will surpass 56 billion kilowatt-hours, sufficient to meet the electricity demands of a city with a population of 20 million. Leveraging our abundant nuclear energy resources, we are actively advancing the development of the Tsinghua University Nuclear Energy Research Institute and the wide-spectrum ultra-high flux test reactor. We are also exploring derivative industries such as nuclear hydrogen production and medical isotopes, accelerating the transition from a “single power station” model to a comprehensive “full-chain ecosystem.” This initiative aims to drive urban industrial upgrading and promote high-quality sustainable development.

The symbiotic relationship between nuclear energy and urban development hinges on the synergistic alignment of technological innovation, human-centered values, and industrial foresight. We eagerly anticipate sharing insights with cities across the globe, forging partnerships through collaboration, and collectively shaping a promising future for sustainable nuclear energy advancement.





Tomas Björkroth

Mayor of Loviisa, Finland



Honourable members of the IAEA, esteemed colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Greetings from the City of Loviisa in Finland!

Our city has hosted two nuclear reactors for soon 50 years. Today the two reactors produce approximately 10% of the electricity in Finland.

Just as Finland and the EU are now adapting to a new world order, so too has Loviisa adjusted in relation to nuclear power. In the seventies the construction of the nuclear power plant was a collaborative project between East and West. The plant's reactors and much of its technology came from Soviet Union.

As such, nuclear power also sparked discussion both locally and nationally, in step with growing awareness of environmental issues. However, the people of Loviisa's attitude towards nuclear power changed as the construction and later operation of the two reactors brought jobs and external influences to the town.

Today, the reactors have been granted an extension until year 2050, and hardly any of the Soviet-era technology remains. The fuel now also comes from the West.

As truly exciting development, I am pleased to share that at the beginning of this year, the City of Loviisa sold 300 hectares of land adjacent to the current nuclear power plant to Fortum, which owns and operates the plant. In Loviisa, we look forward to Fortum's willingness to invest in, maintain, and develop the production of emission-free energy in the city.

We see the city's cooperation and business with Fortum as a real gamechanger. Our hope and belief are that Fortum's investments in Loviisa will bring many more investments to the entire region, particularly in refining the emission-free energy produced in the area. Currently, ten relatively large solar parks are also being planned in Loviisa – something that would not be possible without the grid capacity and stability provided by a large power plant. By "gamechanger", I mean that we in Loviisa now look hopefully towards a bright future and are planning for development instead of dismantling. There is a realistic goal of maintaining our level of services throughout the municipality and, as a concrete example, keeping our small village school open.



Vesa Lakaniemi

Mayor of Eurajoki, Finland



Eurajoki Olkiluoto is known for nuclear power plants, which produces over 30% of Finnish electric production. Nowadays Olkiluoto encompasses the entire nuclear facilities, from power plants to final disposal. We have long history with nuclear business and during these almost five decades nuclear business have served us very well.

Naturally, as a nuclear municipality, we have close cooperation with nuclear companies TVO and Posiva. Key issue is the active and open dialogue between Eurajoki and TVO since 1970s. Of course, high security culture is the most important things when it's comes to nuclear. It's my pleasure to tell you, in Finland and specially in Eurajoki we have seen unique transparency and open communication policy they have in nuclear business. They don't hide anything, they want inform people as much as possible, also in difficult issues. Hence, people in our area knows nuclear issues much better than other areas. Obviously in Finland nuclear endorsement has increased year by year.

A high security culture also needs professional authorities and a responsible ministry, who ensure everything is done according to regulations and laws. In Finland people trust very much to our radiation and Nuclear Safety Authority (STUK). They know that STUK takes great care to ensure that everything is done according to the instructions. You must also know what comes to Eurajoki Municipality's statements for different law and regulation changes regarding nuclear. Ministry of Employment and Economy has noticed our views have been taken into account.

Finally, Olkiluoto has produced clean, climate-friendly electricity for Finnish society from 1970s with nuclear power. A high-level safety culture, combined with high-technology and open communication culture, has greatly increased trust to nuclear. Nuclear business has brought numerous jobs, tax revenues, and countless business opportunities to private companies in the Satakunta county and of course better days for all inhabitants in this area.





Rachel Cotta

Mayor of Cruas, France



Countries worldwide benefit from nuclear energy as a reliable and carbon-free source of power generation. Communities that host nuclear facilities, from uranium mines and power plants to manufacturing, medical isotopes, research and waste management facilities, play an essential role in enabling the sustainable deployment and safe operation of this technology.

As local leaders, we take the pride and the responsibility of contributing to building a promising future for our children and future generations by enabling clean energy transition and broader socioeconomic development of our countries. This future depends on a steady source of clean energy to fuel advancements in infrastructure, education, manufacturing, agriculture and healthcare.

Our communities have experienced firsthand the benefits that nuclear energy can bring, but we are also aware of the associated challenges. The future of nuclear energy must be built on genuine engagement, consent, and sustained support for nuclear communities. As mayors and elected officials of municipalities hosting nuclear facilities, we are committed to work with our citizens, policymakers, national governments and industry leaders to responsibly shape together a sustainable and inclusive future, acknowledging the vital role that nuclear energy plays in powering our lives, communities and countries.





Bertrand Ringot

Mayor of Gravelines, France



Ladies and Gentlemen, dear colleagues,

It is in a dual capacity that I speak before you today: as Mayor of Gravelines and as a member of the ARCICEN Board of Directors. I will therefore address both of these closely linked roles.

I will start by introducing ARCICEN, the Association of Representatives of Municipalities Hosting Nuclear Power Plants and Energy Production Sites Using Nuclear Fuels.

ARCICEN was founded in 1984, during the rapid expansion of France's nuclear program. At that time, local elected officials faced unprecedented challenges: the massive influx of workers, pressure on infrastructure, and the need for suitable financing. A collective voice was needed to negotiate with the State and with EDF. Thus, ARCICEN was created under the leadership of Michel Baroin, then Mayor of Nogent-sur-Seine.

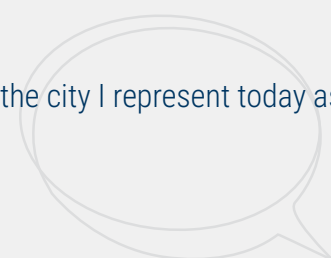
Today, ARCICEN brings together 24 municipalities and 13 intermunicipal communities. It acts across multiple fronts: urban planning, taxation, safety, public information, and participates in all major debates concerning the nuclear sector, both in France and across Europe.


Our history is closely intertwined with the complex and sometimes winding journey of the French nuclear industry's development: a continuous expansion from 1954 to 1990, followed by setbacks, shutdowns, and then a renewed momentum since 2022 with the Presidential announcement of a nuclear revival.

But restarting alone is not enough. Territories must be given the means to adapt. ARCICEN promotes a contractual, pragmatic approach between the State, operators, and local elected officials. Because each territory is unique. Each site raises specific issues, whether related to land use, taxation, or economic support.

In the face of the challenges of the energy transition, the need for low-carbon and controllable electricity, and Europe's quest for energy sovereignty, ARCICEN is more than ever a key player — a bridge between the field, institutions, and citizens.

This local vision that we collectively embody within ARCICEN is fully reflected in the city I represent today as Mayor.





In Gravelines, nuclear energy is an integral part of our history and our future. Since the 1970s, the Gravelines Nuclear Power Plant has been a major player in France's electricity production. With its six 900 MW pressurized water reactors, it is today the largest plant in the country and one of the most significant in Europe.

Operated by EDF and regularly inspected by the Nuclear Safety Authority, it represents a true economic pillar for our region, generating thousands of direct and indirect jobs.

Today, we are reaching a new milestone with the EPR2 project. Integrated into the national nuclear revival program, this project plans for the installation of two new reactors on the Grand Port Maritime site in Gravelines. A public debate was held from September 2024 to January 2025, during which the people of Gravelines overwhelmingly expressed their support for this forward-looking project.

If the timeline is maintained, construction will begin in 2028, with commissioning expected around 2037.

We are extremely proud to have been selected as part of this national revival plan – a goal we have been pursuing since 2004 – and we are fully committed to preparing for the arrival of these reactors.

The City's services are actively working across all sectors: employment, training, housing, mobility, the environment... Nearly 10,000 jobs will be needed during construction, and between 14,000 and 15,000 direct, indirect, and induced jobs once the project is completed! This is an opportunity for us to build a sustainable and dynamic future for our region.

With these two new reactors, the Gravelines Nuclear Power Plant will become one of the largest in the world!

The EPR2 project fits perfectly within the broader momentum of reindustrializing the Dunkirk area, driven by strategic investments and a forward-looking vision. We are proud that Gravelines is part of this transformation, and we reaffirm with conviction our long-standing commitment to low-carbon energy, serving energy sovereignty and the ecological transition.

As for me, I firmly believe that there can be no great nation without industrial production capacity, and no industrial capacity without energy production capacity.

We must produce energy consistently and at a competitive cost in order to continue welcoming energy-intensive industries to France and Europe. This has been the core of my political action since I became Mayor of Gravelines in 2001, and I will continue along this path.

Thank you for your attention, and I warmly invite you to visit the city of Gravelines if you wish.





Zoltán Bagó

Mayor of Kalocsa, Hungary



As mayor and association president, I am committed to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, but we are also aware of the challenges posed by the industry. We can only imagine our future with safe coexistence and adequate information. Residents generally respond more positively to information provided by the mayor than by experts, because they know the mayor personally, trust them, and feel that the mayor directly represents their interests. As a member of the local community, the mayor appears more credible and approachable than external experts, who often communicate in complex technical language and in a more distant manner. The mayor not only conveys information but also helps interpret it, making the message clearer, more understandable, and more trustworthy for the public. We accept an important facility for our country and the economy of the region, but we acknowledge that societal peace has a price.





Ujawala Kale

Mayor of Nagaradhyaksh Palghar, India



Respected All Dias

Salute to Father of Nuclear power

Salute to Mother of Nuclear power –

Salute to Dr. Homi J. Bhabha, Father of the Indian Nuclear programme,

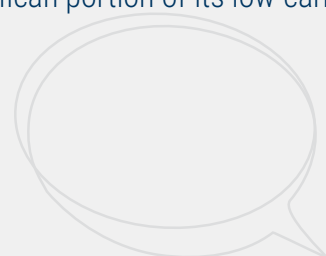
I am proud to say that I am from that area of India, Palghar where at Tarapur, where India's and Asia's first Nuclear power plant – TAPS I & II is established; and the village of Dr. Homi Bhabha's maternal side (Ukne) is situated. This Nuclear power plant has completed construction works commenced in 1964 and its commercial operation started from 1969 and dedicated to Nation by PM Smt. Indira Gandhi in 1970.

In this 56 years of its operation, TAPS I and II had faced many events but no accident till date, this eloquently speaks about the high safety standard of the plant. Nowadays, Tarapur Atomic power Station Unit-3 & 4 (TAPS 3 & 4) there both are commenced operated from Sep 12 – 2005 (TAPS 4) and 18 May 2006 (TAPS 3) and this is the largest power plant in the country (540 MW) per unit.

In this way TAPS has been supplying clean and reliable electricity to our state that is Maharashtra & beyond for decades. Unlike fossil fuels, nuclear power does not pollute our air & it plays a crucial role in fighting climate change.

For our area, Palghar, the presence of TAPS brings certain advantages:

1. Employment opportunities – many skilled and semi-skilled workers from our region are employed there.
2. Infrastructure development – nearby areas have benefited from improved roads, healthcare and education facilities.
3. Clean energy leadership – our state Maharashtra relies on Tarapur for a significant portion of its low-carbon electricity.





However, I fully acknowledge that nuclear energy also raises valid concerns – safety, radiation risks and waste disposal.

But according to my knowledge, TAPS adheres to the highest international safety standards. Regular inspection and emergency preparedness drills are conducted from time to time.

They are conducting public awareness by organising talks/arranging plant visits, exhibitions in the surrounding villages, schools, colleges, and enhance the confidence of the villagers, citizens about advantages of nuclear power. We are more concerned about our Environmental protection.

Our area is blessed with natural beauty, thriving agriculture and a vibrant tribal culture. Any development – including nuclear energy – must respect and protect these treasures and NPCIL also helps to maintain the local environment and refurbish it by planting a large number of trees around the plant and residential complexes.

Our Honorable Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has a vision to develop nuclear energy as a key driver of India's growth.

As India is big country, we need to work on Small Modular Reactors as well as floating reactors. So, I am requesting to IAEA to promote this in proper way.

Nowadays India ranks third in terms of electricity production worldwide, but not only electricity – we are using this energy in many aspects of human life as medicinal field.

So the key is Balance – harnessing the benefits of nuclear power while safeguarding our people and nature.

Thank you.





Deepti Mittal

Municipal Chairperson of Bulandshahr District, India



Honourable delegates, esteemed colleagues,

I am **Deepti Mittal**, Chairperson of the Municipality of Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh, India.

It is a matter of great pride and privilege for me to represent India at this distinguished forum organized by the IAEA. This conference rightly brings to the forefront the vital role of local communities and municipal bodies in shaping the future of nuclear energy. As we say in India, “**Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam**”—the world is one family. In this spirit, we must ensure that the voices of local communities are heard, valued, and meaningfully included in global energy policies.

India is rapidly advancing its nuclear energy programme, with a target of achieving **100 GW of nuclear power by the year 2047**. The Union Budget 2025–26 announced an allocation of approximately **€2.2 billion for the development of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)** — a major step forward under the vision of “**Atmanirbhar Bharat**.”

As Chairperson of the Municipality of Bulandshahr, I strongly believe that community engagement is not a formality — it is the foundation of sustainability. When people are informed, involved, and respected, trust is built, and progress becomes durable.

Mahatma Gandhi once said, “The soul of India lives in its villages.” If that soul is to support nuclear development, it must be empowered through transparency, education, and collaboration. **Gautam Buddha, the Light of Asia, taught us that peace is the highest path.** In a world troubled by conflict, let us remember that nuclear science must serve the cause of peace, not destruction. Nuclear energy should be a source of light and life — not fear. It must be harnessed **only for clean, sustainable, and inclusive development** of our societies. Local governments are not merely implementers — they are carriers of trust. Because we are closest to the people, we serve as crucial pillars in energy policy, environmental protection, and emergency communication. Let us move forward together in the true Indian spirit of **Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s vision of “Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas”**—collective effort and inclusive growth — to ensure that nuclear energy projects are not only technologically sound but also socially acceptable and sustainable.

Thank you. Dhanyavaad.



Bolat Abdraliyev

Mayor of Kurchatov City, Kazakhstan



Dear colleagues, conference participants!

I represent the city of Kurchatov, the center of nuclear science in Kazakhstan. The city's city-forming organization is the National Nuclear Center of the Republic of Kazakhstan — which is the leading research organization of Kazakhstan's nuclear industry with the largest and most modern experimental base, including unique research reactors.

By closing the Semipalatinsk nuclear test site in 1991, Kazakhstan became the first country in history to voluntarily renounce nuclear weapons.

Today Kazakhstan is on the threshold of a historic event — the construction of its own nuclear power plant. In the context of growing energy consumption and decarbonization of the economy, nuclear power is seen as a reliable and low-carbon source of basic generation. At the same time, issues of safety, public consent and openness are at the center of discussions. In Kurchatov, we are actively working with the population, conducting explanatory activities, engaging the public in dialog and relying on the scientific potential of the city when making decisions.

The uranium industry is also an integral part of our business. Kazakhstan is the largest producer of natural uranium in the world. We strive for its sustainable and safe mining, complying with all international standards and environmental requirements. Kazakhstan actively cooperates with the IAEA on issues of nuclear safety, accounting and control of nuclear materials, and the development of human capital in the industry. International cooperation plays a key role in building confidence and sharing knowledge. We actively participate in IAEA technical cooperation projects, develop partnerships with scientific centers in different countries, train young specialists, and introduce best practices. Only together, through open dialog, can we overcome challenges and ensure a sustainable future.





As the elected Akim (mayor) of the city of Kurchatov, I am committed to the peaceful use of nuclear technology and am proud to contribute to a safe future for our citizens and future generations.

Mayors play a crucial role as a link between local communities and public authorities. We are obliged to convey reliable information to people, to build trust, to ensure transparency and public involvement in decision-making.

That is why such meetings as today's are of special value. The exchange of views and experience allows us to develop effective approaches to ensuring sustainable development, building a culture of security and creating favorable living conditions in our regions.

Thank you for your attention.





Erlandas Galaguz

Mayor of Visaginas Municipality, Lithuania



Ladies and Gentlemen,

I speak to you today not only as the Mayor of Visaginas, but as a nuclear engineer and physicist with over twenty years of experience at the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant – from its construction and operation to its complex decommissioning. Our goal was clear: not to leave the burden of radioactive waste management to future generations.

Lithuania is a unique nuclear country. We are one of the few in the world with practical, hands-on experience across the entire nuclear energy cycle – from design and operation to safe shutdown and waste disposal.

Our culture of discipline and precision allowed us to achieve the highest levels of nuclear safety. The Ignalina plant was one of the safest in the world. This achievement reflects not only engineering excellence but also the professionalism and responsibility of our people.

However, nuclear energy is not only about technology. It is about building what I call a nuclear mindset society – a society that understands nuclear energy's role in progress, sustainability, climate responsibility, and energy security. This mindset is shaped by education, public engagement, transparency, and trust.

Today, Lithuania remains a nuclear country by infrastructure, knowledge, and international recognition – but we no longer generate nuclear energy. That must change. We understand the strategic value of nuclear energy for Europe and the world. We are ready to lead and to share our expertise – from technology to regulation, from safety to community dialogue.

Let us work together to build a clean, safe, and forward-looking nuclear future.

Thank you.





Blasius Goraseb

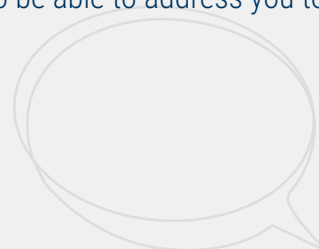
Mayor of Swakopmund, Namibia




Namibia is the world's third-largest producer of uranium, and the leading producer in Africa. Despite this strategic advantage however, the uranium industry contributed only 2.1% to the country's GDP in 2023, with its primary benefit being employment. The nuclear industry includes nuclear science, technology and its applications in sectors like healthcare, energy, research and innovation, water, agriculture, environment, manufacturing etc. We therefore firmly belief that integrating nuclear energy into Namibia's energy mix could significantly enhance power reliability, promote sustainability and strengthen the nation's resilience to external price shocks. By leveraging our abundant uranium resources for domestic energy production, we can unlock greater economic value and ensure long-term energy security.

The nuclear industry offers opportunities that are worthwhile for consideration to set Namibia on a path that will support sustainable economic and industrial growth. Nuclear as an industry has the potential to meaningfully support national development goals, however, Namibia is yet to conclude and implement the required legislation, regulations and institutions to regulate a nuclear industry to operate safely and responsibly. One of the main obstacles that has hindered the progress in the full realization of the nuclear industry is the absence of fit for-purpose institutional framework, as there is currently no institution devoted to the promotion and development of the nuclear industry in Namibia.

The development of the potential flagship projects (uranium value addition, small modular reactor and nuclear power generation, research reactor radio-pharmaceutical production, radioanalytical laboratories and radiation processing, all require multidisciplinary teams of skilled professionals supported by an appropriate institutional infrastructure (financial & physical) working in cohesion within the same organizational unit. Therefore, there is a need for a National Nuclear Energy institute in Namibia. The uranium mines and exploration projects are situated in the Namib Desert in the hinterland of our coastal town of Swakopmund, which is the uranium capital of Namibia. As the mayor of Swakopmund, it gives me therefore great pleasure to be able to address you today, and I thank the organizers wholeheartedly for inviting me.



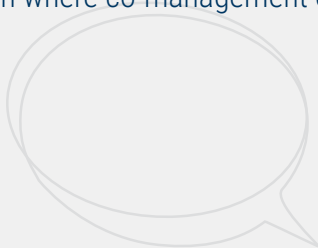


Uranium mining has a long history in Namibia, as a matter of fact our Rössing Uranium Mine has been in operation without interruption since 1976, that is a stunning 49 years which makes this mine the longest operating uranium open pit in the World. Being located close to Swakopmund, and with many employees of mines residing in Swakopmund, this uranium operation has had a profound influence on the town. The three active mines and the other activities employ a substantial number of staff, in 2024 more than 7800 people were directly employed by the Namibian uranium sector. Four (4) additional 4 projects are at an advanced stage and may develop into mines, while others are still in exploration phase.

As the mayor of Swakopmund, I highly value and attach great importance to engagement and dialogue with this stakeholder community. At the same time the industry also places great emphasis on stakeholder relations, and with the other members of the community, who are not directly involved with the uranium sector, and who might even have other priorities that potentially clash with the interests of the uranium industry. Both the municipality which I serve, and the uranium industry therefore believe in best practice in stakeholder engagement to enhance the understanding of diverse perspectives, concerns, and interests of all stakeholders. Consequently, we consider it indispensable to incorporate stakeholder views into our decision-making processes.

However, we also believe that the local community as the host of our uranium activities has a shared responsibility to facilitate and nurture these activities for economic development and the benefit of future generations. Swakopmund is the tourist destination of choice, but we also have agricultural activities on the outskirts of our town. Regular stakeholder engagement can lead to peaceful coexistence and co-management of shared resources, such as water, which is such a valuable resource in our desert environment, to give but one example.

The Namibian uranium industry has therefore formed the Namibian Uranium Association, with the Namibian Uranium Institute as its executive arm. As part of its stakeholder engagement activities, the institute has formed a working group with farmers, who grow crops downstream of the mining activities. Through dialogue and provision of information and reliable data, fears of the farmers that borehole water might be contaminated with effluents from the mines could not only be alleviated but has led to a situation where co-management of a shared resource is taking place.





In support of this stakeholder engagement, my municipality is also working closely with the Namibian Uranium Institute, with a staff member of the Department of Health Services serving on that working group. I believe on that working group. I believe that such cooperation greatly enhances the chances for economic activities being aligned with public interests and long-term sustainability goals, and for fostering trust and a shared sense of purpose.

In closing I would like to thank you once again for having me, for giving me the opportunity to share our Namibian experiences with you, and for providing me with a chance to learn from others.

Thank you for your attention!





Gerben Dijksterhuis

Mayor of Borsele, The Netherlands



Thank you for allowing me to speak today. I'm excited to share how we involve residents in nuclear developments – decisions that have long-term effects on people's lives and communities. These are not just technical or financial issues; they are deeply social.

My name is Gerben Dijksterhuis, and since 2017, I've been mayor of the Dutch municipality of Borsele, home to about 23,000 people in the southwest of the Netherlands. Borsele hosts the only nuclear power plant and nuclear waste storage facility in the country. Three years ago, it has also been chosen as the preferred location for two new nuclear power plants.

A common misconception is that, because we've lived with a nuclear plant for 50 years, everyone in Borsele supports this expansion. That's not the case. Over the past three years, we've engaged with our residents to understand their concerns and expectations regarding this potential development.

While opinions about nuclear energy can be strong, the decision to build new plants lies with the national government. Locally, we asked ourselves: What will this mean for our community? Under what conditions could we accept it? By asking these questions and creating space for dialogue, we focused on shaping our shared future rather than just debating 'for or against' nuclear energy.

This shifted the conversation. People came together to discuss what our region needs to remain a good place to live, work, and thrive. We invited 100 randomly selected residents, aged 16 and older, to write our community's terms and conditions. To ensure future generations were represented, we included more young people under 35. Out of 350 responses, an independent agency selected the final group.

These 100 citizens met for five sessions, learning about the plans, consulting local experts, and sharing their own ideas. Seven participants even visited a similar nuclear project in the UK for inspiration. Together, they developed 39 conditions addressing key topics like:





- Health and safety
- Minimizing construction disruption
- Protecting nature and the landscape
- Access to housing, education, and jobs
- Supporting local services
- Fair compensation for inconvenience

We also commissioned an independent study to assess the impact on traffic, noise, employment, and the environment. This provided a solid, fact-based foundation for negotiations.

Our efforts paid off. The national government acknowledged the quality of our work and agreed to invest in infrastructure, housing, education, and more. While negotiations continue, the principle is clear: hosting national energy projects requires treating our community as an equal partner. A final decision on the new plants is expected in 2026, but for us, the process is already underway, and we remain committed to protecting our residents' interests.

Let me leave you with this:

When people are not part of the process, they feel left out. They feel decisions are made behind closed doors. That's when trust disappears – and with it, the support we need for a successful energy transition. But when we involve people from the start – when we ask questions, listen to answers, and explain our own constraints – something powerful happens. We build understanding. We build trust. And we create better outcomes for everyone.

Thank you.





Fredrik Holm

Mayor of Halden, Norway



Esteemed Director General Grossi, dear colleagues,

On behalf of one of the two only bonafide nuclear municipalities in Norway it is a pleasure to be welcomed with such generosity even though Norway does not have any nuclear power plants.

We were however the sixth country in the world to build a nuclear reactor and the Institute for energy technology in Halden has hosted the longest running research project in Norway and has contributed to nuclear safety all over the world since 1958.

We thought nuclear power was dead and the research reactor was closed down in 2018. We are now in the middle of the task of handling the spent research fuel. Halden municipality is the host of the Norwegian Nuclear Decommissioning agency. The town council has on several occasions passed resolutions stating our willingness to find solutions for both an intermediary and final Deep geological repository for the spent fuel which is now stored – literally – in the middle of our town.

The support for a new nuclear facility in Halden is strong and the final vote in March was unanimous across all party lines. It is my belief that strong support for nuclear endeavors is rooted in our historical experience that our research reactor has only brought us prosperity in many respects.

Our high social acceptance has also spearheaded a nationwide association of municipalities which has changed the national political attitude towards nuclear energy. Over the past couple of years all parties have gone from various degrees of opposition to nuclear power in Norway to varying degrees of positivity. All major parties are now open towards exploring nuclear power or have moved away from their outspoken opposition.

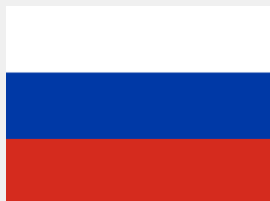
In September it is time for a parliamentary election. The nuclear future in Norway is indeed interesting at it has been built largely by local authorities.





Andrei Zakhartsev

Head of Zarechny Municipal District, Russian Federation



Good day, esteemed colleagues and participants of the international conference on stakeholder engagement for nuclear power programmes! It is a great honor for me to speak today on behalf of the municipal district of Zarechny at this IAEA platform.

Zarechny is located in the Sverdlovsk Region, and for nearly 70 years, its history has been inextricably linked with the Beloyarsk Nuclear Power Plant. It was here, in 1964, that the country's first industrial power unit was commissioned. Since then, our city has lived alongside cutting-edge technologies, evolving as an example of synergy between science, safety, and sustainability. For 60 years now, the Beloyarsk NPP has not only generated energy but also provided jobs, attracted investment, and stimulated the city's development. It is a unique facility with fast neutron reactors, and we are proud that the future of Russian nuclear energy is being built right next to Zarechny.

For us, nuclear energy is not just an industry — it is part of our city's identity. The Beloyarsk NPP is our strategic partner, the largest employer, and a reliable foundation for economic growth. Thanks to the plant, we have been able to build modern social infrastructure, ensure high employment levels, attract investment, and create a comfortable urban environment. According to an independent assessment, in 2024 Zarechny ranked 37th in terms of urban environment quality among all cities in Russia and entered the top five cities of the Sverdlovsk Region. This is the result of systematic work and open dialogue between the authorities, business, and the public. We are proud that more than 80% of our residents support the development of nuclear energy. The people of Zarechny understand well that this is not only a reliable energy source but also a path to a low-carbon future. We live next to a nuclear plant, and we know: nuclear energy can be safe, efficient, and environmentally friendly.

A special role in our development is played by cooperation with the "ATR NPP" Foundation — a platform for interaction between nuclear cities. This is more than just an exchange of experience. It is a joint effort to design the future, foster youth initiatives, and train professional personnel. Today, we are open to the world. We are ready to share our practices and learn from our colleagues. I am convinced: cities that host nuclear power plants can become hubs of sustainable growth — places where science serves society, and technology creates prosperity. Thank you for your attention!



Igor Gogora

Mayor of Kalná nad Hronom, Slovakia



My name is Igor Gogora, and I am the mayor of the municipality of Kalná nad Hronom in the Slovak Republic. I have been working for our municipality since 2010, after completing my university studies in the rural development program.

The Mochovce Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) is located within our municipality. Its construction began in 1982. By a decision of the then “communist” government, and without any public discussion, it was approved that a nuclear power plant would be built on the territory of the former village of Mochovce. Nearly 500 inhabitants were displaced. Most of the adult population never came to terms with that decision for the rest of their lives. In 1990, the cadastral territory of the former village of Mochovce was annexed to Kalná nad Hronom.

On the one hand, there were the difficult fates of the original inhabitants; on the other hand, there was a great potential for the development of the entire region – which we utilized. In our municipality, the investor built 228 apartments for the employees of the nuclear power plant, and additional housing units were built in the nearby town of Levice. Local residents significantly participated in the construction, commissioning, and later also in the operation of the nuclear facility. I consider the creation of job opportunities and the education of the local population in the field of nuclear operations to have been the right decision, as it helped build trust and serious relationships. Mochovce NPP gradually gained the trust of the public and continues to demonstrate that the benefits of generating electricity in this manner far outweigh the potential risks. I believe I can say that our population trusts the state authorities that coordinate and authorize nuclear processes, as well as the power plant itself.

Currently, the process of informing the public about NPP activities takes place through various standard channels: website, official notice board, social media, etc. However, it is worth highlighting the Regional Association of Towns and Municipalities of Mochovce, which currently has 93 members. Since 2005, this association has operated the Mochovce Citizens’ Information Commission, whose members – mayors of towns and municipalities around Mochovce NPP – are nominated by the Association. The Commission meets regularly with the management of Slovenské elektrárne (the NPP operator), JAVYS (the operator of radioactive waste



treatment and storage facilities), the Nuclear Regulatory Authority of the Slovak Republic, and other important authorities . These meetings provide a platform for dialogue, access to first-hand information, and opportunities to visit other nuclear facilities and discuss best practices. I consider the establishment of this Commission to be one of the pillars of responsible and transparent nuclear facility operation. I am grateful for this approach and cooperation.

Nuclear energy is one of the pillars of the Slovak Republic's national economy, and every day, the operators reassure us that it can be managed sustainably and responsibly.

Thank you for your attention.





William Matsheke

Executive Mayor of Rand West City Local Municipality, South Africa



Fraternal Greetings to:

the Director General of the IAEA, Dr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, fellow Mayors here present, ladies and gentlemen!

Rand West City Local Municipality, from the Gauteng Province of South Africa, appreciates the opportunity to participate in this IAEA International Conference on Stakeholder Engagement for Nuclear Power Programmes 2025. This Conference is timely as it provides a useful platform to share and gain knowledge and best practice.

South Africa remains committed to furthering research and innovation in nuclear science and technology as key drivers of socio-economic progress. We believe that nuclear science, technology as well as the power and non-power applications for peaceful purposes play an important part in advancing the objectives of our National Development Plan, the African Union's Agenda 2063 and the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

These efforts will be embarked upon within the context of South Africa's national policy and legislative mandates, actively working towards a Just Energy Transition and exploring a mixed approach to energy solutions to the benefit of local communities and municipalities, and by extension South Africa.

The Rand West Municipality has historically derived its economic base from gold mining. This commodity has been steadily diminishing and the establishment of an alternative economic driver such as nuclear energy, in all its aspects, could be a major game changer in a rural locality, such as our municipality.

The establishment of a potential nuclear power plant could serve as a significant driver of our local and regional economies, offering job creation for both skilled and unskilled labour, as well as local investment. Such an opportunity could create a strong connection between energy creation and job opportunities and accelerate socio-economic development in our area.





Perhaps our most ambitious project yet is to promote the use of nuclear power as a critical tool in mitigating climate change. South Africa is currently looking to revitalize our nuclear programme to provide energy security and grid stability through clean, dependable energy. In this our local governments are playing an increasingly important role, under the guidance and leadership of the National Department of Electricity and Energy.

We are committed to educate our communities and strengthen our public participation towards the Peaceful utilisation of nuclear energy and its beneficiation.

In conclusion, South Africa participates in various levels in the Agency's Technical Cooperation Programme as part of our national priorities and commitment to developing solutions to challenges within the fields of energy, health, agriculture, water and environmental management.

Rand West City is open for business and the education of communities to alternative energy sources!

Come and invest in our city!





Juan Antonio Díaz Agraz

Mayor of Almaraz, Spain



Good morning, everyone. Before beginning my speech, I would like to thank the Director General.

Mr. Rafael Mariano Grossi, thank you for the invitation to this first conference, for defending and raising awareness of atomic energy.

Colleagues, mayors, all of us here have much in common: nuclear energy in our territories. I would like to talk about the Almaraz Nuclear Power Plant, a municipality of which I have the honour of being mayor.

Almaraz belongs to the Arañuelo countryside region in Extremadura, western Spain, and currently has 1.615 inhabitants. Since the inauguration of its first reactor in 1981 and the second in 1983, the Almaraz Nuclear Power Plant has contributed to providing stability, development, well-being, and quality jobs, not only to the population of Almaraz, but to all the municipalities in the region. It has managed to stop many families from migrating to other places in search of work and well-being; in short, it has been the saving grace for the depopulation of small rural towns.

It is one of Spain's five nuclear power plants. It has two reactors that provide 7% of the country's energy generation. It uses clean energy, emits no CO₂ into the atmosphere. It is environmentally friendly, safe, provides stability to the Spanish energy system, and contributes to the European Energy Mix.

It is ranked by the WANO ranking as one of the best and safest in the world. It is a twin of the North Anna nuclear power plant (Virginia, USA), whose useful life has been authorized for up to 80 years.

But as you all know, the Almaraz Nuclear Power Plant is the first on the closure schedule proposed by the PNIEC in Spain.

If this does not change, the first reactor will be closed in November 2027 and the second in October 2028.

When I said at the beginning of my speech that we all have something in common, it was to remind each and every mayor here present that we must defend our children, our parents, our families, our neighbours – in short, all those who have trusted us to fight against any adversity that may cause them pain, poverty, sadness, and abandonment, which is what will happen with the closure of nuclear power plants.



And believe me, there will be much more of this in our territories if we all fail to stop this closure.

We are the first, but we will not be the only ones. We will see the same suffering in our friends in other regions a few years later, and we will be powerless to do anything, because it may be too late.

Today, I ask for support from each and every one of you, colleagues around the world. Raise your voices in our defence, so that in the future it will not be necessary to defend you.

Thank you very much.





Jorge Peña García

Mayor of Trillo, Spain



Ladies and gentlemen,

It is an honour to address you on behalf of Trillo, Spain, at a key moment for the energy future of our regions. I represent a community that has coexisted with nuclear energy for more than 35 years — a community whose economic, social, and energy stability is now threatened by a phase-out schedule we consider both premature and unfair.

The Trillo Nuclear Power Plant is not just a facility. It is vital infrastructure that supplies 3% of Spain's electricity, prevents over 2.5 million tons of CO₂ emissions annually, and provides direct and indirect employment to more than 1,300 people. Its operation, efficiency, and safety are endorsed by international organizations such as WANO.

The recent nationwide blackout that left millions without power highlighted an uncomfortable truth: we need firm and stable energy generation. Nuclear plants like Trillo ensure that stability. Removing such major generators without viable alternatives puts the country's energy security at serious risk.

Moreover, unilateral decisions such as the 30% increase in the ENRESA fee — in breach of the 2019 agreement — are financially suffocating the plants, accelerating a shutdown that is not technical, but political.

We are not asking for privileges. We are asking for realism. An energy transition cannot rely solely on aspirations; it must be grounded in data, dialogue, and responsibility toward the regions involved.

Trillo is ready to continue operating beyond 2035. We have the technology, the experience, and the commitment. All we ask is the opportunity to prove that nuclear energy can — and must — be part of Europe's sustainable future.

Thank you very much.





Miquel Àngel Ribes i Jornet

Mayor of Ascó, Spain



Good afternoon. My name is Miquel Àngel Ribes Jornet, Mayor of Ascó, a town in Catalonia, Spain, that has hosted a nuclear power plant for over 40 years.

Our municipality has played a key role in Spain's energy system – providing reliable electricity, contributing to decarbonisation and supporting economic development. At the same time, we have lived with the challenges that come from hosting such a strategic facility.

We believe that the energy transition must be fair, and it must start before the shutdown of nuclear power plants. In Catalonia, the regional government has created a Nuclear Transition Fund that reinvests part of the nuclear tax revenue directly into the affected territories. This allows us to plan ahead, promote economic diversification, and support local businesses and innovation.

We also believe that nuclear energy remains essential today. It is the backbone of a stable, reliable and carbon-free electricity grid. Without it, the system would be more volatile, more expensive, and more polluting.

That is why we support the continued operation of existing nuclear plants under safe and regulated conditions, and we ask for greater recognition and long-term support for the communities that host them.

I fully support the Joint Statement by the Mayors of Nuclear Communities, and I join my voice to theirs in calling for real engagement and lasting commitment to our territories.

Thank you.





Fabian Sjöberg

Municipal Commissioner of Östhammar Kommun, Sweden



Dear colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak here today.

My name is Fabian Sjöberg, and I have the honour of serving as the mayor of Östhammar, a coastal municipality in eastern Sweden. Our community is home to Forsmark – a nuclear power plant that plays a crucial role in Sweden's electricity supply. With three operating reactors, Forsmark generates about one quarter of all electricity used in Sweden, and nearly 40% of the electricity used in our region.

But our contribution does not stop there.

Östhammar is also the designated site for Sweden's final repository for spent nuclear fuel. This deep geological facility, currently entering the construction phase, is a key part of Sweden's long-term strategy for managing high-level radioactive waste. The decision to locate the repository in our municipality was the result of more than 40 years of research, dialogue, and political consensus – and ultimately, it was made with the support of our local community.

Hosting both large-scale electricity production and the country's most important long-term environmental project is a unique responsibility. It is a national task, managed at the local level – and we take that responsibility seriously.

Forsmark today sits on a site where we also have space – fully prepared – for the construction of up to ten additional large-scale reactors. This means Östhammar could continue to be a cornerstone of Sweden's clean energy future, should the national government choose to expand nuclear capacity.

However, with this responsibility also come challenges. Today, our municipality receives no additional financial compensation for hosting this vital infrastructure. At the same time, we face increasing demands in areas like housing and skilled labour. Ensuring that we have the right workforce and enough homes for the people who will build and operate these facilities is not a local issue alone – it is a national and international one.



Municipalities across Sweden, Europe and the world must learn from each other, and share strategies that work – to ensure that development is both fair and successful.

But local acceptance does not come automatically. It is the result of open dialogue, access to information, and a shared sense of purpose. Our residents understand that we are not just “hosting” a facility – we are contributing to a sustainable national system. In return, we expect fairness, investment, and recognition.

As mayors, we are not only political leaders – we are guardians of public trust. When projects like these are managed with respect for local voices, when benefits are tangible and when risks are addressed honestly, it is possible to achieve long-term support.

Östhammar shows that a small community can carry a big responsibility – and be proud of it.

Thank you for your attention.





Fatih Önge

Mayor of Gülnar, Türkiye



Distinguished Participants, Respected IAEA Representatives,

First of all, I would like to express my sincere gratitude – on behalf of myself and the people of Gülnar – for the kind invitation to this meaningful and important workshop.

As the host district of Turkey's first nuclear power plant, the Akkuyu NPP, Gülnar is witnessing a historic transformation in our country's energy journey. As the local municipality, our role is to manage this major project responsibly by ensuring strong community engagement and transparent communication on both environmental and social dimensions.

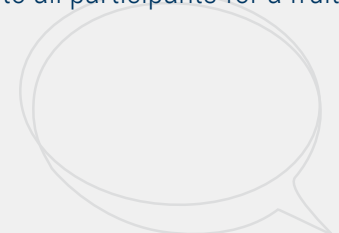
The Akkuyu Nuclear Power Plant is a large-scale, strategic energy investment consisting of four VVER-1200 reactors with a total installed capacity of 4,800 megawatts. Once fully operational, it is expected to supply around 10% of Turkey's electricity demand – while producing zero carbon emissions during operation.

As Gülnar Municipality, we support this strategic project that contributes to our national development, while also maintaining a balanced and sensitive approach that listens to and respects the voices of our local residents.

We acknowledge that nuclear energy can sometimes raise public concerns. However, with transparency, education, and inclusive governance, we can foster an atmosphere of trust and constructive dialogue within our communities. It is a top priority for us.

This workshop is a valuable opportunity for local authorities to benefit from international experiences and to work collectively toward common goals. In particular, I would like to emphasize the importance of strengthening local capacities in the fields of safety, environmental management, and public communication, ideally through enhanced international cooperation and support mechanisms.

Thank you once again for the opportunity to speak, and I extend my best wishes to all participants for a fruitful and collaborative workshop.





Yurii Fomichev

Mayor of Slavutych, Ukraine



Dear colleagues!

I am the Mayor of Slavutych – the youngest city in Ukraine! It was built in 1987, after the largest man-made disaster in human history – the accident at the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant. In fact, to this day, Slavutych remains something of a satellite city to the power plant.

Among our residents are the very people who eliminated the consequences of the disaster and restored the operation of the ChNPP's power units, doing so under extremely difficult and challenging conditions. Those are thousands of people: nuclear energy specialists, emergency service workers, builders, ecologists, scientists, and, finally, politicians – individuals who made enormous efforts to restore public trust in nuclear energy!


Indeed, disasters such as the one that took place in Chornobyl or the Fukushima Daiichi one that transpired in Japan cause great skepticism in nuclear technologies used for energy production! And the cost of overcoming the consequences of such disasters is extremely high – it is people's health and even lives.

Back then, in 1986-1987, thanks to their commitment to safety and professionalism, the local specialists of Slavutych managed not only to rebuild the infrastructure but also to reignite people's trust in nuclear energy and ensure the stable operation of the ChNPP after the catastrophe. To date, Slavutych remains a center of knowledge and experience in this field.

Unfortunately, due to political pressure, the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant ceased generating electricity in 2000 – despite the fact that it had produced more electricity after the accident than ever before! Nowadays, our specialists in the Chornobyl Exclusion Zone are always busy “generating safety”!

However, a new challenge to the global development of nuclear energy rose with the breakout of a full-scale war launched by Russia against Ukraine in February 2022! This invasion had fundamentally changed the security doctrine for the ways of “peaceful atom”!

Allow me to remind you that the Chornobyl Nuclear Power Plant was occupied by Russian troops within the very first few hours of the full-scale invasion – on February 24, 2022. At the time, the soldiers of the National



Guard of Ukraine, who were guarding the nuclear facility from terrorists and unauthorized access, had no protocols to respond to a possible full-scale invasion by the army of another country!

After all, the civilized world – and that is the kind of world in which nuclear energy should develop – did not consider the possibility of a nuclear power plant being seized by a hostile military! Unfortunately, that is exactly what happened in Ukraine – first with the Chornobyl NPP, and later with the Zaporizhzhia NPP, the largest nuclear power plant in Europe!

We have become witnesses to unprecedented threats to nuclear energy – not just for Ukraine, but for the whole world as well. And on February 14 of this year, when a Russian combat drone struck the surface of the New Safe Confinement Arc that covers the destroyed Unit 4 of the Chornobyl NPP, the world was reminded of the Chornobyl tragedy! The consequences of that strike may be much more serious than just the breach of the protection layer, as the confinement as a whole lost its protective properties – so we no longer have a guaranteed 100-year solution for the containment of Unit 4 of the Chornobyl NPP!

Russia's actions aimed at seizing control of nuclear power plants certainly compel the international community to reconsider mechanisms that would ensure the physical security of nuclear facilities during wartime. There must be guarantees that make it impossible to conduct military operations near such dangerous areas.

I would also like to emphasize the importance of safety for satellite cities of nuclear power plants when it comes to countering current challenges. The situation in Slavutych, at the Chornobyl NPP, and at the Zaporizhzhia NPP in Enerhodar – which had remained under occupation for over three years due to the lack of effective response mechanisms – all confirm the necessity of such measures.

Despite the fact that the Chornobyl Power Plant was de-occupied in March 2022, the issue of safety remains just as critical for us as ever. Likewise, the residents of Enerhodar and the employees of the Zaporizhzhia NPP must be protected from all consequences of war!

Naturally, Slavutych – a city that became a symbol of nuclear energy reemergence after the infamous disaster – supports the development of modern nuclear energy that meets all safety standards. We have unique experience, which we are ready to share with other countries and international organizations.



On this occasion, I want to express my gratitude to all our partners and friends, including the IAEA, for their continuous humanitarian support and assistance to Ukraine during these trying times!

I sincerely welcome the most recent prisoner exchange that took place in presence of the international community, and we hope to bring all our people back home – to Ukraine! I ask my fellow mayors and international organizations to put in every possible effort in our cooperation regarding this matter!





Oleksandr Menzul

Mayor of Varash, Ukraine



Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour for me to represent the community of Varsh – a city that is home to the Rivne Nuclear Power Plant and nearly 50,000 people who live in daily proximity to nuclear energy.

I speak to you not only as a mayor, but also as someone who worked at the nuclear plant over 24 years. This path has shaped my deep understanding of both the technical side of operations and the public's expectations regarding nuclear safety.

In Varash, we say: safety starts with people. And by people, we mean not only plant workers – but also their families, teachers, doctors, and municipal services. Trust is not a slogan. It is the result of daily joint efforts, open dialogue, and visible partnership.

Together with Rivne NPP we have developed a Community Development Strategy through 2027. Nearly 40% of the working group consisted of plant employees. We held 20 sessions to formulate goals that reflect both the development of the city and the specific nature of nuclear energy operations.

Even during wartime, this partnership between the community and the energy sector has only grown stronger. Since 2022, the IAEA has provided more than 50 million UAH in technical assistance to Rivne NPP, as well as nearly 9 million UAH for medical equipment for our city hospitals. This is a real example of how international support can directly save and improve lives.

However, challenges remain. Our most critical issue is the condition of the roads connecting our community to the M-07 highway. These roads are a vital part of any emergency evacuation plan. The lack of quality access is not just a logistical issue – it is a direct threat to the safety of our population. This problem can only be solved through synergy between the community, the State, and international community.





Dear participants, stakeholder engagement is not a formality. It is a living system of relationships between experts, governments, and society. In Varash, we do not simply coexist with nuclear energy – we co-create safety every single day.

Let me conclude with this thought:

When a community feels heard – it becomes your ally.

When it is ignored – it becomes a risk.

Let us build this trust – together!

Thank you for your attention.





Lesley Hill

Mayor of Leiston-cum-Sizewell Town Community, United Kingdom



SZC and future energy projects – The Leiston perspective

An introduction to Leiston and the hamlet of Sizewell

Leiston is a small town of approximately 6,500 residents, 2 miles from the Suffolk coast, which is where the hamlet of Sizewell lies. Together they form the parish known collectively as Leiston-cum-Sizewell. The town has an engineering heritage, with the first production line of its kind in the country at the Richard Garrett Engineering Works, established over 200 years ago. The company went into liquidation in the 1970s but a museum lives on in its memory within part of the original factory, which is in the centre of the town – The Long Shop Museum.

The retail offer is modest, with basic food and provision shops but it is necessary to go further afield for anything else.

Leiston has one primary school and a secondary school. The nearest further education college is 20 miles away. There is a leisure centre and swimming pool.

The town of Leiston today

By the late 1950s, The Richard Garrett Engineering Works had been creating energy from steam for generations. So, it wasn't surprising that this rural town on the remote Suffolk coast was chosen as a site for the first generation of nuclear power stations. So Leiston and the neighbouring hamlet of Sizewell have now been host to the nuclear industry for well over half a century.

A readymade, small, industrialised community in a rural, seaside location, befitting a mysterious new technology that few understood. Sizewell A, a feat of engineering unlike anything we had seen before, grew before our eyes amongst the dunes, the harebells and the yellow lupins.

Therefore, in the 1980s, the prospect of Sizewell B didn't come as a huge surprise, despite the lengthy Layfield enquiry. So, two decades plus after Sizewell A, Leiston endured a further round of turmoil brought about by the construction of a one-of-a-kind PWR reactor of US design. There were certainly benefits for some during this



relatively short construction period, although many of those were short lived.

Others were affected by a downturn in house prices and a buy-to-let culture spawned by the need for construction worker housing. Leiston was labelled as a town annexed to the Sizewell B project and this continued long after completion of the build, stifling economic growth which wasn't helped by the housing restrictions imposed by the Sizewell A emergency planning zone.

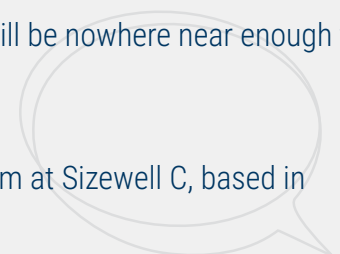
It has to be said that since becoming operational, the B station has been, to all intents and purposes, a good neighbour. Leiston has, in recent years, settled into a modest, fairly comfortable status quo, helped by the relaxation of the emergency planning zone which followed the defuelling of Sizewell A.


Employment in the town is above the national average and both Sizewell A in its decommissioned state and Sizewell B, continue to offer a stable living for many local people, enhanced by regular outage work. A benefit which goes far beyond Leiston. EDF's management of the surrounding Sizewell B estate has been beneficial for local people and visitors alike, offering countryside and coastal walks for us all to enjoy. Not to mention the designations achieved by careful management of the habitat.

It is fair to say that Leiston and its surrounding environment, which is central to the East Coast of Suffolk, has been firmly placed on the tourist map in recent years. The unspoilt coastline and shingle habitat at Sizewell, which is within the designated Suffolk Coast and Heaths National Landscape and only a stone's throw away from flagship nature reserve of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds at Minsmere, is a magnet for both local people and holidaymakers.

Sizewell C had been waiting in the wings since before Sizewell B was operational, and had it not been for the sudden about-turn by government, a second PWR might already be sitting alongside Sizewell B and the inconvenience of another construction period long over. But we have only just embarked on a twelve year journey which will eclipse the experience of Sizewell B. It is now 18 months since the start of the groundworks to prepare the site and there are 1,800 workers on site already. This is now causing problems for the infrastructure of our small town with lack of accommodation, traffic congestion and parking problems. Peak worker numbers are expected to reach a minimum of 8,000 in about four years time and by then, a temporary accommodation campus for 2,700 will have been constructed on site. But this will be nowhere near enough to meet the needs.

It's important to emphasise that the site operations team and the local office team at Sizewell C, based in





Leiston, have an open-door policy with town representatives. They do understand what a huge change this will mean for our town, and they DO listen. But they are tasked with building a nuclear power station of unimaginable proportions – you only have to see Hinkley, as some of us have, to truly appreciate its vastness. It will be the largest construction site in Europe. The Sizewell C team know it won't be plain sailing for Leiston and there will be many occasions when all they can do is listen and be sympathetic.

So, will the community of Leiston-cum-Sizewell, as host parish for Sizewell C, be recognised for accepting – reluctantly by many – this renewed imposition on our way of life? Growth in our economy, jobs and educational opportunities are being claimed as the big ticket items. But we believe that for every person benefiting from Sizewell C there will be many more who are adversely affected. For example, by the loss of employees to higher paid roles (particularly those currently in hospitality, the care sector and retail), noise, increased traffic, light pollution, shortage of trades, the list goes on. The town is already seeing residents selling up and moving elsewhere, taking advantage of the buoyant housing market. But even this might be short lived.

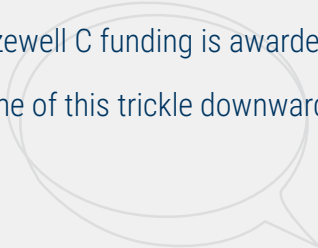
The top piece of advice from parishes in Somerset hosting the sister project and Hinkley Point, was to ensure the additional infrastructure to support the project was in place early, because for Hinkley it was all far too late. It is already too late for Leiston.

We have a new, emerging town centre road scheme, but it is still on paper and will not be delivered and completed until 2027. While traffic builds up daily, this scheme, designed to make the town centre a better experience for residents and visitors, has only recently made any real progress after a period of inactivity. It includes widening pavements, introducing a partial one-way system to discourage through traffic and seeks to make the public realm a pleasant, user-friendly space. But the scheme is yet to reach an agreed final design.

The Sizewell C Community Fund

Leiston, unlike our counterparts in Somerset, has no part of the fund ring-fenced. As representatives for the residents of Leiston, the town council has to weigh up the pros and cons of any large-scale projects we might take forward. This takes time and expertise, which costs money, so where do these resources come from?

Parishes have no Sizewell C funding to administer any of the extra work or pay for project plans and feasibility studies. So, we still have to work out how best the fund will work for us. Direct Sizewell C funding is awarded to county and district councils for their extra workload, and we would like to see some of this trickle downwards.





We are, after all, a group of people who are volunteers supported by a small cohort of paid employees with limited hours. And Leiston is a small town with a long list of assets to support.

While we are delighted that small community organisations can benefit immediately from the fund, it is much more complex for the town council to achieve any significant, capital projects that will really make a difference for our residents.

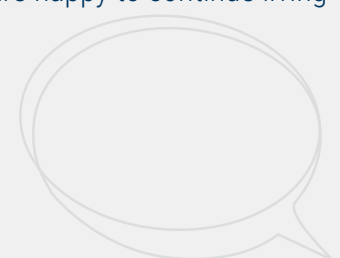
We have concerns for the future as more and more energy projects come forward. For Leiston and the hamlet of Sizewell, Sizewell C is quite enough of a burden on our community. Leiston has pledged to soldier along through the construction period, doing our best with the limited resources at our disposal. But ten years ago, at the start of the Sizewell C development plans, no one knew that hot on its heels would come the offshore energy sector, National Grid and all the other companies tasked with delivering the government's ambitious net zero target and the distribution of power to the rest of the UK.

Having reluctantly resigned ourselves to broaden our shoulders and take on the challenge of Sizewell C, we now have the prospect of effectively being surrounded on all sides, north, south, east and west, by the construction of many more energy projects.

We are a community being forced to bear far too much responsibility and pressure in the name of future UK energy security and we must ensure our voices are heard by those at the very top tier of government. We can achieve this by being united in our efforts to try and persuade government to re-group and think again about imposing such enormous responsibility on our rural, coastal community.

Leiston is rightly proud of our unique industrial heritage but we know that Sizewell C is enough for this community. We have lived beside nuclear since the 1960s but we think our parish is now full to capacity with nuclear infrastructure. We will make the most of the benefits this brings but no doubt they will come at a price.

To conclude. Once built, the nuclear plants are good neighbours and quietly go about their work with a minimum of disruption, giving local people a lifetime of good employment opportunities both directly and indirectly. It is the 12 year plus period of construction for Sizewell C and the enormity and complexity of the project which makes us fearful, not the operational power station itself. We are happy to continue living alongside nuclear power – as we have done for the last 60 years.





Struan Mackie

Councillor of Dounreay, United Kingdom



The nuclear estate in Caithness and North Sutherland has profoundly shaped our region's identity, economy, and future. For over 50 years, the Dounreay civil site and the NRTE Vulcan facility have been central to our community, first as hubs of innovation and employment, and now as centres of decommissioning expertise. The presence of these facilities brought substantial benefits: well-paid jobs for generations, an influx of skilled professionals into a historically depopulated area, and sustained support for local businesses. In many ways, the nuclear sector has stabilised our economy as traditional industries like fishing, agriculture, and mining declined. The scientific and technical legacy of Dounreay has positioned us as leaders in nuclear decommissioning and environmental management.

Yet, this legacy has not been without challenges. As pioneering sites, commissioned in the 1950's and 60's, long-term remediation wasn't fully considered at the outset. The decommissioning work is often complex, unique and unprecedented. Policy tensions between local elected members and the public and our devolved government – especially around new nuclear developments and waste management, have also created friction.

Our community has been deeply engaged throughout, demanding safety, transparency, and accountability. The transition from active operation to decommissioning has brought economic uncertainty and the urgent need to plan for a post-Dounreay future.

This experience, however, has built resilience and sparked innovation. While Dounreay will remain in decommissioning for decades, it's vital that we continue investing in skills, infrastructure, and diversification. Organisations like the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority and Focus North are key partners in this transition. The nuclear legacy of Caithness and North Sutherland is complex, but it is also a source of strength and pride. We have faced our challenges with determination and vision, and we continue to look forward – building on our legacy to secure a sustainable and prosperous future.





Paul Thomas

District Councillor for New Romney, Folkestone & Hythe District Council, United Kingdom



Good morning, my name is Councillor Paul Thomas, and I am the Nuclear Legacy Advisory Forum (NuLEAF) representative for Folkestone and Hythe District Council, I represent the Dungeness and Romney Marsh Nuclear Community. I was the Mayor of New Romney from 2019 to 2023, which is the largest town on Romney Marsh. I worked at the Dungeness site for most of my 37 years in the Nuclear Industry, live within 8 kilometres of the site and would often cycle to work.

The Dungeness site comprises two Nuclear stations:

Dungeness A is a dual reactor Magnox station that ceased generation in 2006 after 40 years and is currently being decommissioned by the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA).

Dungeness B is a dual Advanced Gas Cooled Reactor (AGR) station that ceased generation in 2021, after generating for 36 years and is currently being defueled. When generating, these stations contributed over £40 million per year into the local economy and employed approx. 1,000 full time staff across the two sites. Both sites continue to employ a large number of staff, many of whom are from the local community on Romney Marsh. We are an established Nuclear Community.

The communication of operational activities at both sites is achieved via the Site Stakeholder Group (SSG) which includes input from the operating Companies (NDA and EDF), the nuclear regulator – the Office of Nuclear Regulation and the environmental regulator - the Environment Agency. Both companies provide community funding for local organisations. The NDA has a very well-developed. Socio-Economic Strategy and Plan which provides funding for local community projects to mitigate some of the effects of the post-generation changes on the local community. These local community projects are also supported by Folkestone and Hythe District Council, Kent County Council and are overseen by the Romney Marsh Partnership.

The Dungeness site has the land, the cooling capability, the trained staff and the grid connection necessary for the construction of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) but as importantly it also has an engaged, nuclear-aware community to support it in the next stage of its nuclear generation journey.



Rebecca Casper

Mayor of the City of Idaho Falls, United States of America



Good afternoon.

I am Rebecca Casper, Mayor of the City of Idaho Falls, a small city in the state of Idaho in the western United States with a proud nuclear legacy. Idaho Falls is home to the Idaho National Laboratory. America's Lead Nuclear Facility.

For more than 70 years, INL has been a cornerstone of our local identity and economy. It is:

- where the first usable nuclear electricity was generated in 1951.
- where 52 reactors have been built and tested – more than anywhere else in the world.
- where the U.S. Navy's nuclear propulsion program took root, training thousands and shaping a legacy of excellence in safety, engineering, and national defense.

We are proud not just of this history, but of our continued role in developing the future – with microreactors, advanced fuels, and grid integration tools.

Our region soon will host the MARVEL microreactor and the Natrium demonstration – projects two efforts aimed at proving that advanced reactors can be small, safe, and community-focused. Idaho has also led in nuclear cleanup, showing that hosting nuclear and protecting the environment can go hand in hand. Our citizens value innovation, but our commitment to our land, its water and our people runs deeper still.

As an academic, I value research – but we do not pursue research for its own sake – the real value is in what comes next when technologies proven in Idaho power real communities, create job opportunity, and strengthen regional energy resilience.

Our experience has taught us nuclear succeeds when it has local trust – when it is rooted in local partnership. When citizens and municipal leaders feel heard and are invited to shape the future rather than simply adjust to it—confidence grows, and this fosters opportunity.

I firmly believe the world's next chapter of clean energy will be written in communities like Idaho Falls – where scientific innovation is informed by local experience and powered by public trust.



JJ Chavez

Mayor Pro Tem, City of Carlsbad, United States of America



My name is J.J. Chavez and I'm the Mayor Pro Tem of the City of Carlsbad, New Mexico. I also serve on the Energy Communities Alliance Executive Board.

My community hosts and I work at the only operating nuclear deep geologic repository in North America – the Waste Isolation Pilot Plant (WIPP) where I'm the Deputy Mine Safety Health Administration "MSHA" Compliance Manager. I am one of the people responsible for the safety of workers and operations at WIPP.

The City of Carlsbad is extremely proud to be the host community for the United States repository for defence-generated transuranic waste.

Our community's support for WIPP is driven by safety. WIPP's transportation safety record is flawless and the careful emplacement process in salt beds deep below the surface ensures that this transuranic waste is isolated forever. WIPP's safety case is also supported by decades of testing the transportation canisters, decades of underground salt tests and continued air and soil monitoring.

Members of the Carlsbad community have been strong advocates for WIPP for generations now. In fact, the Department of Energy first began considering southeast New Mexico when local elected officials began advocating for the site in the 1970s. When the waste first arrived in Carlsbad in 1999, residents lined the streets to cheer, because there had been a lot of hard work to get to that point. That high level of support has not diminished.

We are very proud of the role we play in the national and international discussion about waste disposal.

Our community is a key part of the WIPP facility and the WIPP facility is a key part of our community.

Thank you!





Casey Hancock

Mayor of the City of Hartsville, United States of America



Countries worldwide benefit from nuclear energy as a reliable and carbon-free source of power generation. Communities that host nuclear facilities, from uranium mines and power plants to manufacturing, medical isotopes, research and waste management facilities, play an essential role in enabling the sustainable deployment and safe operation of this technology.

As local leaders, we take the pride and the responsibility of contributing to building a promising future for our children and future generations by enabling clean energy transition and broader socioeconomic development of our countries. This future depends on a steady source of clean energy to fuel advancements in infrastructure, education, manufacturing, agriculture and healthcare.

Our communities have experienced firsthand the benefits that nuclear energy can bring, but we are also aware of the associated challenges. The future of nuclear energy must be built on genuine engagement, consent, and sustained support for nuclear communities. As mayors and elected officials of municipalities hosting nuclear facilities, we are committed to working with our citizens, policymakers, national governments and industry leaders to responsibly shape together a sustainable and inclusive future, acknowledging the vital role that nuclear energy plays in powering our lives, communities and countries.





Randall Ryti

Mayor of Los Alamos, United States of America



I appreciate the opportunity to participate in this IAEA stakeholder conference and share some perspectives from Los Alamos County on being a long-term host of a nuclear facility. Our community is substantially tied to the nuclear industry and understands public perception issues with nuclear. My County was one of the partners in the carbon free power project, which would have been a new nuclear power plant using small modular reactor technology. This project was terminated by these community partners due to a lack of subscriptions, which was tied to project costs.

We need to be able to sometimes temper enthusiasm for nuclear projects with real-world perspectives on cost and other issues like the still unresolved impacts of legacy uranium mining in the southwestern USA and limited nuclear waste disposal options in the USA.

The path forward must be a collaborative approach to siting nuclear developments and dealing with nuclear waste in the short-term and long-term. We also need to acknowledge and remedy the environmental legacies of the nuclear industry. This is the only way that nuclear energy can continue to play an essential role in providing a clean energy future.

Los Alamos County supports the business case for nuclear energy innovation for existing and new nuclear deployment for power generation and manufacturing, including the development of nuclear microgrids, research on fusion technology, and research on adopting reprocessing methods throughout the US nuclear industry.



Scan here to learn more about IAEA activities on
stakeholder engagement for nuclear power programmes:



International Conference on
Stakeholder Engagement
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26–30 May 2025

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