



67th Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference

Australian National Statement

President,

It is a great privilege for me to address this General Conference today.

Australia is a founding member of the International Atomic Energy Agency and we remain steadfastly committed to the IAEA's goals.

At a time when we should be unifying to address shared challenges, we find ourselves confronting the most challenging strategic circumstances since the Second World War.

Australia continues to condemn, in the strongest terms, Russia's illegal and immoral invasion of Ukraine.

We remain gravely concerned by the nuclear safety, security and safeguards implications of Russia's reckless actions in Ukraine. We condemn Russia's continued control of the Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant. We call on Russia to cease hostilities and withdraw immediately from the site, and from the whole of Ukraine.

We are pleased to support the IAEA's work in Ukraine, including through the provision of more than 1.6 million dollars in funding and protection equipment in support of the safe and secure operation of Ukraine's nuclear facilities. We look forward to supporting the resolution on Ukraine being proposed by Canada, Finland, Costa Rica and Singapore at this Conference.

President,

We remain deeply concerned by the Islamic Republic of Iran's failure to resolve outstanding and serious safeguards issues in a full and technically credible manner.

Australia calls on Iran to reverse all steps away from the JCPOA and recommit to full compliance with its nuclear-related commitments, including implementation of the Additional Protocol.

Australia condemns, in the strongest terms, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK)'s ongoing pursuit of weapons of mass destruction and delivery systems.

We urge the DPRK to cease provocations, reverse course, and make a sustained commitment to diplomacy and a return to full compliance with IAEA safeguards and the NPT as a non-nuclear-weapon state, allowing the return of IAEA inspectors. We will again co-sponsor the resolution on the DPRK at this Conference, and call on all Member States of the IAEA to do so as well.

President,

Amid these strategic challenges, the world cannot lose sight of our commitment to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

Nuclear applications make a vital contribution to human health, climate-smart agriculture, and the protection of the environment. We commend the IAEA's flagship initiatives in these relevant areas, including the recently launched Atoms for Food initiative.

We are pleased to announce that, this year, Australia will contribute a further 3.5 million dollars to support the IAEA's efforts to deliver tangible outcomes in our region using nuclear science and technology.

Our funding will support the IAEA's Rays of Hope initiative, the IAEA's Global Water Analysis Laboratory (GloWAL) Network and the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Fellowship Programme, including for candidates in our region.

And to mark Australia's chairing year of the Regional Cooperative Agreement for Asia and the Pacific, we will make a contribution under that agreement. I'd also like to invite you all to Australia's side event this Thursday morning on Impactful Partnerships in Nuclear Science and Technology in the Asia and Pacific Region, to highlight the benefits of regional cooperation in addressing common developmental priorities.

Australia continues to use our own leading nuclear science and technology expertise and world-class nuclear science infrastructure to address global challenges. The Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) is continuing to construct a first-of-a-kind waste treatment plant for the liquid by-product of Molybdenum-99 nuclear medicine. Australia will be presenting on this development at this year's Scientific Forum, and we encourage interested Member States to attend.

President,

In mid-March this year, the Leaders of Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States announced the Optimal Pathway for Australia to acquire conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines. We have welcomed the Director General's reports and updates to the Board of Governors on Australia's naval nuclear propulsion program, including his statement issued in response to questions raised at the June meeting (2023/Note-44).

We remain fully committed to ensuring our approach meets the highest non-proliferation standard. Throughout the lifecycle of Australia's program, the Agency will be able to continue to verify and conclude that there has been no diversion of declared nuclear material, no misuse of facilities, and no undeclared nuclear material or activities.

We fully support the Director General's undertaking to transmit Australia's Article 14 arrangement, once developed, to the Board of Governors for appropriate action.

President,

The Agency has a busy agenda. Among its many roles, the IAEA has a critical part to play in monitoring the discharge of ALPS treated water from Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. Australia has full confidence in the IAEA's independent, impartial, and science-based technical advice. We also welcome Japan's ongoing transparency and international engagement including with Pacific Island countries.

President,

We note with concern the pressing issues that the IAEA is facing in relation to its budget. We continue to pay our assessed contributions to the Agency in full and on time and we urge others to do the same.

We would like to end by reiterating Australia's unwavering support for the independence, mandate and technical authority of the IAEA. Under the leadership of Director General Grossi, the Agency's staff work diligently, professionally and impartially. You have our full confidence and respect.

Thank you, President