

Statement NL GC67 by Minister of Foreign Affairs Ms Hanke Bruins Slot

Your Excellencies,

This summer, millions of people around the world saw the story of J. Robert Oppenheimer, and the creation of the atom bomb.

This masterful – and terrifying – film does more than simply show the making of the first nuclear weapon.

It also explores the new nuclear world that was born when the bomb went off.

A world in which humanity had, for the first time in history, harnessed such immense power that we were capable of destroying the world itself.

At that moment, we also gained a new responsibility – one greater than any we'd ever had before.

The responsibility to ensure our collective survival.

We, the international community, have worked to fulfil this responsibility in a spirit of cooperation – even in times of geopolitical rivalry.

We have created mechanisms to tame the forces that – if left unchecked – could bring disaster.

The non-proliferation regime is the result of that work. And it's something we can all be proud of.

Especially the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

And certainly the IAEA.

This organisation – with its technical expertise and safeguards mechanism – works tirelessly to promote international peace and security in the nuclear domain.

Its efforts are extremely valuable. But they can only succeed if all parties commit. And support the Agency in its work.

Trust in the organisation and its methods is vital.

So I call on all countries, and Iran in particular, to cooperate fully with the Agency.

Today this is more important than ever, as global interest in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology is growing.

There are good reasons for this.

Nuclear technology can play a crucial role in resolving global challenges.

Issues like climate change, food shortages and energy insecurity.

Solutions that will help us create a better, healthier and more secure future.

Something that's in everyone's best interest.

So new advances in nuclear energy – like small modular reactors – are something we should all follow with interest.

Something we should prepare for together.

The best way to do that is to ensure proper safeguards and safety at all such facilities.

And the IAEA needs the tools and the means to do this.

Unfortunately, this is not a given.

As we speak, Russia's war in Ukraine continues – and remains a cause for grave concern.

Especially the situation at the Zaporizhzhia nuclear power plant.

The right to safe nuclear energy is an indispensable part of the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Nuclear safety and security must therefore be protected – and respected – at all times.

This is outlined in the Agency's 'seven indispensable pillars' for ensuring nuclear safety and security during an armed conflict;

And in its five principles for the protection of the Zaporizhzhia plant, which were presented to the UN Security Council on 30 May 2023.

These pillars and principles are simply too important to be ignored.

Your Excellencies,

I began my statement with the film *Oppenheimer*.

A story that is not just a reflection of past events, but also a mirror of our present reality.

Now, as then, we need to work together to prevent nuclear conflicts and disasters.

In other words: we must work for global stability.

With enduring effort, cooperation and mutual trust.

That is the only way to create a future of hope and partnership, and a world free from the shadow of nuclear destruction.

Thank you.