

**U.S. National Statement delivered by  
Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy, David M. Turk  
at the 68th IAEA General Conference Opening Plenary  
Vienna, Austria  
Monday, September 16, 2024**

**INTRO AND THANKS**

- It is an honor to represent the United States at this 68th IAEA General Conference.
- Thank you to Director General Grossi and the Secretariat for their leadership over the past year.
- Let me begin with a message from the President of the United States, Joe Biden:

**PRESIDENT'S STATEMENT**

*The United States remains fully committed to advancing the peaceful uses of nuclear technology around the world, while supporting the IAEA's nuclear safety, security, and safeguards missions. The IAEA's implementation of international safeguards is essential not only to verification of the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) obligations but also to laying the foundation for nuclear disarmament.*

*The N-P-T is, and will continue to be, key to achieving the IAEA's objective to accelerate and enlarge the contribution of nuclear energy, science and technology to peace, health and prosperity. The United States remains deeply committed to the N-P-T, and sincerely appreciates the Secretariat's critical role in upholding it.*

*As I look to the future, I am encouraged by the role civil nuclear energy can play to help keep the goal of limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius within reach. The United States is committed to deploying civil nuclear energy to meet global net-zero targets, including our pledge alongside 24 partners to triple globally installed nuclear generation capacity by 2050, and strengthen energy security while ensuring adherence to the strongest safety, nonproliferation and nuclear security norms and best practices.*

*Lastly, I condemn Russia's continued brutal aggression in Ukraine. The United States reaffirms our support for the people of Ukraine and for the IAEA's critical efforts to prevent a nuclear disaster as a result of Russia's ongoing actions, which endanger Ukraine's peaceful nuclear facilities and critical energy infrastructure.*

- Let me add my own comment to our President's words:
- Our efforts to promote responsible nuclear stewardship stand in stark contrast to Russia's reckless and irresponsible words and actions.

## **IRAN AND DPRK**

- We are also concerned with **Iran's** lack of cooperation with the IAEA—particularly in light of the recent statements by current and former Iranian officials regarding Iran's technical capabilities to produce nuclear weapons.
  - Let me be clear – The United States and our partners stand resolutely behind the IAEA in calling on Iran to implement its safeguards obligations fully and immediately.

- We also underscore that for more than 30 years, IAEA Member States have adopted a General Conference resolution condemning the threat posed by **DPRK's** unlawful nuclear activities....with all of our countries demonstrating broad international support for denuclearization of the Korean peninsula.
  - The United States and our partners call on the DPRK to fulfill its obligations under relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and urge the DPRK to return to diplomacy without delay.

## **NUCLEAR SECURITY**

- Speaking more broadly....nuclear security is as important as ever.
- The United States commends the IAEA for its leadership in convening the fourth International Conference on Nuclear Security, which I was privileged to participate in this May.
- I encourage all Member States to join the 28 others who have signed the joint statement on the Role of Nuclear Security in Harnessing the Power of Nuclear Energy.
- Nuclear security, together with nuclear safety, safeguards, and emergency preparedness and response, fosters public confidence in nuclear technology.

## **CIVIL NUCLEAR POWER**

- As President Biden said in his statement, the United States recognizes the important role of civil nuclear power in our urgent and comprehensive transition to a net-zero economy.

- We were heartened by the progress at COP28, with the historic inclusion of nuclear in the Global Stocktake and the launch of the Declaration to Triple Nuclear Energy—endorsed by 25 countries from four continents.
- Domestically, the U.S. has made huge strides to reinvigorate the civil nuclear industry:
  - In April, the second new reactor in as many years entered commercial operation, providing the United States with more than 2 gigawatts of new clean electricity.
  - In July, President Biden signed into law new provisions that will accelerate licensing and deployment of advanced nuclear reactors.
- At the same time, the U.S. civil nuclear industry is providing products and services to **partner with countries** to achieve their civil nuclear goals...
  - ...While incorporating effective and efficient nuclear security, safety, and safeguards early in the design and deployment process.
- As we sprint to deploy *today's* clean energy solutions as quickly as possible, we are also investing like never before in additional transformative options, including **fusion energy**.
  - Our “Bold Decadal Vision” for fusion energy is catalyzing breakthroughs in our labs and an unprecedented partnership with a range of cutting-edge companies.

- And we're doing so responsibly, as should all other IAEA Member States.

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- Beyond clean energy, we know nuclear technologies also hold enormous potential to address the UN's **Sustainable Development Goals**, and improve quality of life around the world.
- The United States remains deeply committed to the IAEA's **Rays of Hope** program, which is expanding access to cancer diagnosis and treatment around the world.
  - Earlier this summer, we announced an additional **\$6 million** for this initiative.
  - This brings our total contribution to this program to **more than \$55 million**.

## GENDER EQUALITY

- Finally, we must all focus on developing the *workforce* of the future—including by addressing gender and geographic inequality.

## CONCLUSION

- Last year, we reached a milestone of 70 years of “Atoms for Peace.”
- This year, we are looking *forward*...to the potential for nuclear technologies to help solve many of our shared challenges.

- Together, we can build a future defined by partnership and peace—fueled by the awesome power of the atom.
- Thank you.

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