

NUCLEAR POWER IN THE 21ST CENTURY

The International Atomic Energy Agency helps its Member States to use nuclear technology for a broad range of peaceful purposes, one of the most important of which is generating electricity.



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The accident at the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant in Japan in March 2011 caused anxiety about nuclear safety throughout the world and raised questions about the future of nuclear power.

Two years on, it is clear that the use of nuclear power will continue to grow in the coming decades, although growth will be slower than was anticipated before the accident. Many countries with existing nuclear power programmes plan to expand them. Many new countries, both developed and developing, plan to introduce nuclear power.

The factors contributing to this growing interest include increasing global demand for energy, as well as concerns about climate

change, volatile fossil fuel prices, and security of energy supply. It will be difficult for the world to achieve the twin goals of ensuring sustainable energy supplies and curbing greenhouse gases without nuclear power.

The IAEA helps countries that opt for nuclear power to use it safely and securely.

Countries that have decided to phase out nuclear power will have to deal with issues such as plant decommissioning, remediation, and waste management for decades to come. The IAEA also assists in these areas.

I am grateful to the Russian Federation for hosting the 2013 International Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Power in the 21st Century in St Petersburg in June. This timely conference provides a valuable opportunity to take stock of nuclear power in the wake of the Fukushima Daiichi accident.

A high level of public confidence in the safety of nuclear power is essential for the future of the sector. Much valuable work has been done in the past two years to improve safety. But much remains to be done. It is vitally important that the momentum is maintained and that everything is done to ensure that nuclear power is as safe as humanly possible.

This edition of the IAEA Bulletin provides an overview of many of the issues to be addressed at the St Petersburg conference. These include nuclear safety, the role of nuclear power in sustainable development, technological innovation, and nuclear institutions and infrastructure.

I wish the conference participants every success in their deliberations.

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