

Baroness Neville-Rolfe

Statement to the IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security

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Introduction

1. It was during this week in 1953 that the famous 'Atoms for Peace' speech was made to the UN General Assembly and the message in that speech is as true today as it was then. Nuclear power is an astonishing achievement, splitting atoms to create such enormous amounts of energy. It does, however, need careful handling and so we must ensure that it remains both safe and secure.
2. The UK has been producing nuclear power longer than any other state and has recently decided to proceed with our first new nuclear power station for a generation. With this commitment comes responsibility. That is why I would like to thank the IAEA for hosting this conference and to Director General Amano for his continued leadership on this topic.

The IAEA

3. The UK recognises that the IAEA plays a pivotal role in the global nuclear security architecture and in coordinating international efforts as new challenges and opportunities emerge.
4. We must ensure that the IAEA is properly resourced so that it can carry out this role, and that is why the UK is proud to be a leading contributor to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund. I am pleased to announce today that we will make a further contribution of at least £5.5 million before the end of March 2017 to continue to ensure this important work.
5. This fund, alongside wider efforts by the IAEA with its Member States, has helped to deliver important tools and services in 2016. These included seven IPPAS missions; nine national Design Basis Threat workshops; assistance to Member States at their request; and two more publications under the Nuclear Security Series. We welcome these achievements but we must continue to make progress and we hope that Member States will join us in making further contributions to the Nuclear Security Fund.

The Future of Nuclear Security: challenges and opportunities

6. The threat we face from terrorism and crime is changing and evolving and we all share the responsibility of ensuring nuclear and radiological material is safe and secure. It is therefore vital that we prioritise our efforts on nuclear security and maintain our readiness to respond quickly and effectively to this threat.

7. At the same time, we must adapt to the changing face of technology; embracing the opportunities it presents and meeting the challenges that come with it. For example, cyberspace can present both a threat to nuclear security and provide tools for improving the systems and techniques underpinning nuclear security. It is right that we are focusing efforts in this space.
8. The UK is proud to have taken forward the commitments it made at the Nuclear Security Summit earlier this year on cyber security. We have successfully delivered two workshops on industrial control systems for international participants and completed a joint exercise programme with the United States. This work enhanced our combined ability to respond to major cyber-attacks on the civil nuclear sector.
9. We face diverse threats, and we need a strong, engaged and diverse workforce to counter them. An effective, versatile and global approach to nuclear security relies upon a diverse range of people, from all backgrounds and disciplines. I would like to emphasize this point, which is in line with the position I have taken in other sectors of the global economy. I see a major role for women in successful global nuclear and security industries. With this in mind, I'm delighted that the UK was able to fund the 2016 International Essay Competition on Nuclear Security to encourage newcomers into the sector. The winners were all women - coming from Singapore, Sudan, and the United Kingdom – and this demonstrates that valuable expertise is coming through the pipeline from all corners of the world and from women who have been underrepresented in the sector to date.

Ensuring a Sustainable Global Nuclear Security Architecture

10. The responsibility for securing nuclear and radiological material rests with us as states, and we need to ensure that the current nuclear security architecture is properly implemented within our home countries.
11. One area where there is collective recognition that more needs to be done is transport. Together there has been some good progress and the UK is committed to continuing this. We are pleased to have a world-leading nuclear shipping capability in the International Nuclear Services here at the conference. We have also hosted a follow-up International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission earlier this year, and found it a valuable opportunity to share good practices. We encourage others to host their own IPPAS missions.
12. Our Government is fully committed to further strengthening the global nuclear security architecture. To do this we must maintain the momentum of the Nuclear Security Summits, building on the raised profile of nuclear security, supporting the central role of the IAEA and addressing new and emerging security challenges.

13. Nuclear security cannot be achieved unilaterally. At the international level, we should all work together to build on recent successes including the successful entry-into-force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. We are committed to promoting the full implementation and universal take up of this and other legal instruments that strengthen global nuclear security.

14. I also want to acknowledge the central role that the IAEA plays in coordinating our efforts to strengthen nuclear security which complement the global architecture.

Nuclear Renaissance

15. The UK Government's reaffirmed commitment to new nuclear, coupled with the new emphasis on industrial strategy, makes this a prime opportunity for the nuclear industry. Of course, nuclear security will be vital component of this. Once completed, Hinkley Point C will provide up to 7 percent of the UK's electricity needs and bring benefits to both the local and global supply chain. Beyond Hinkley, industry has set out proposals to construct five further power stations, with the potential to generate around 30 percent of the UK's electricity needs by 2035.

16. In order to reap the benefits of nuclear energy and ensure it fulfils its true potential, we are taking action now to address the skills gap. We recently announced the National College for Nuclear, which is set to open its doors next year and aims to train 7,000 people by 2020 who we hope will go on to become next generation of nuclear innovators. The college will be complemented by our strong academic community and I am pleased that we have representatives from many of these institutions, including King's College London, here at the conference.

Conclusion

17. We are at an exciting moment in the history of civil nuclear and this conference provides a prime opportunity to work together towards a stronger sustainable global nuclear security architecture that works now, and into the future.

18. Thank you.