



62nd Regular Session of the IAEA General Conference

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Australian National Statement

Ambassador Brendon Hammer
Governor and Resident Representative of Australia to the IAEA

Madam President

The International Atomic Energy Agency's role in promoting peaceful uses of the atom, in safeguarding nuclear material, and in enhancing nuclear safety and security underpins international confidence in the use of nuclear technology, and allows the unique benefits of nuclear science to be harnessed to the betterment of humanity.

Innovative nuclear technologies are helping to address some of the most urgent humanitarian and environmental challenges of our day - Spanning climate change, water management, agricultural practices, human and animal health, and a great deal more.

Indeed, the civil applications of nuclear science have a key role to play in efforts to meet all 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Madam President

As the civil uptake of nuclear energy increases internationally, ever growing demands are being placed on the IAEA. This means the Agency needs to adopt approaches that maximise its effectiveness.

Australia believes one way to achieve higher efficiencies and better outcomes is for the Agency to recognise nuclear security, safety, safeguards and technical cooperation as mutually reinforcing and interdependent - and to adopt a one-house approach.

Madam President

Australia commends the Agency's efforts to increase representation of women at the IAEA, and to further opportunities for women in nuclear science. Seeking gender parity at the Agency is not only the right thing to do. But – with research showing that increased organisational effectiveness comes with gender parity – it is also the smart thing to do.

Madam President

Australia continues strongly to support the IAEA's Technical Cooperation Program. We look forward to participating in this years *IAEA Ministerial Conference on Nuclear Science and Technology* and the Scientific Forum on *Nuclear Technology for Climate: Migration, Monitoring and Adaption* - which will seek to address current and emerging development challenges.

And in one of many examples of our involvement in TC, I note that, through a Memorandum of Understanding with the Government of Sri Lanka, the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation is helping Sri Lankan researchers to investigate Chronic Kidney Disease of Unknown Aetiology – a major public health challenge in Sri Lanka and beyond.

Madam President

Australia has a long been committed to nuclear safety and radiation protection, and is a leader in implementation of international best practice.

Reinforcing our commitment to continual improvement in regulatory best practice, Australia requested an Integrated Regulatory Reform Service (IRRS) mission, which we will host in November 2018.

Madam President

Australia is pleased our expertise in the safety of radioactive waste continues to be recognised internationally. Our successful nomination in May 2018 of a Vice President

for the *Sixth Review Meeting of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management* demonstrates our strong commitment in this area.

Madam President

Australia appreciates the services the IAEA provides for states to enhance their nuclear security regimes. In particular, Australia thanks the IAEA for holding a follow-up International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission in Australia in late 2017. We commend this service to all states.

Australia also congratulates the IAEA on the successful *International Conference on Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials and Nuclear Facilities* held in November 2017.

Madam President

Achieving the full potential of the peaceful uses of nuclear technology – including through technical cooperation – relies upon securing the confidence of the international community that nuclear material and technologies are not being diverted for non-peaceful uses.

IAEA safeguards form the fundamental guarantee that such diversion is not occurring and they underpin the global nuclear non-proliferation regime.

All Member States are obliged to ensure an effective and universal safeguards system, and it is crucial that this system is independent, credible, and adequately resourced.

So, Australia wholeheartedly welcomed the Director General's recent report on the costs and benefits of State-Level Approaches and we fully support the Agency's efforts to improve the effectiveness of the safeguards system through application of the State-Level Concept.

Moreover, as the first country to bring the Additional Protocol into force, Australia also strongly supports the universalisation of Aps, and we call upon those yet to bring an Additional Protocol into force to do so as soon as possible.

Madam President

Australia welcomed North Korea's expressed commitment to denuclearisation in the Panmunjom Declaration last April, and in the Joint Statement from the US-North Korea summit last June.

We earnestly hope that these commitments signal a permanent cessation of DPRK's flagrant disregard of successive United Nations Security Council and IAEA resolutions that it has previously demonstrated through repeated testing of nuclear weapons and weapon delivery systems in 2017.

North Korea's development of nuclear weapons continues to present an unacceptable challenge to the global nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament framework.

Australia urges North Korea to demonstrate that its expressed commitments are genuine by taking concrete, verifiable and irreversible steps towards denuclearisation.

We call upon North Korea to return to the NPT and sign and ratifying the CTBT as a positive demonstration of its commitment to abiding by its denuclearisation commitments.

Until we see such steps, Australia will maintain full economic and diplomatic pressure on North Korea through complying with all sanctions currently applied under the relevant UN Security Council Resolutions and through application of our own additional autonomous sanctions.

Madam President

Australia welcomes the Director General's advice that Iran continues to provisionally apply its Additional Protocol, continues to cooperate with the Agency and that it continues to meet its obligations under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Australia attaches the highest importance to the Agency's activities in Iran under the JCPOA and we call on Iran – and all remaining parties to the JCPOA – to continue fully to implement the Agreement's provisions.

Excellency

Peace, health, prosperity, and our collective development are at the heart of the IAEA's remit. In this 62nd year, the IAEA and international community can continue to rely on Australia's constructive and tangible support.

Thank you