

United Kingdom National Statement

Chair,

The UK would like to congratulate both Australia and Kazakhstan on their appointments as Presidents of this conference.

I would like to start by thanking both you and your teams for your valiant efforts to deliver a Ministerial Declaration for this year's conference. We share your disappointment that consensus on this Declaration could not be reached due to objections from one Member State. This is a missed opportunity for the states represented here today to demonstrate our united commitment to nuclear security. The UK fully aligns itself with the Co-Presidents' Statement.

Nuclear security underpins the peaceful uses of nuclear...

And it improves public confidence, both of which are vital for its continued expansion.

The International Atomic Energy Agency plays a critical role in strengthening global nuclear security.

As a leading contributor to the IAEA's Nuclear Security Fund, the UK will continue to support the Agency's important work.

The UK welcomes the focus on 'Shaping the Future' at ICONS 2024.

We also note the focus on emerging nuclear technologies, including small and advanced modular reactors.

We recognise the need for security to continue to evolve, considering both the potential benefits and risks of new technologies.

It is fundamental that the highest standard of nuclear security is considered for any nuclear application.

The UK therefore supports including security at the design stage of any new reactor, to ensure the next generation of nuclear electricity remains inherently safe, secure, and cost-efficient.

But we're keen to keep looking to the future.

We must stay ahead of emerging challenges and risks by developing security-by-design solutions today to ensure the safe and secure roll-out of emerging nuclear technology.

Earlier this year, the UK saw the adoption of our Civil Nuclear Roadmap to 2050, which sets out the UK's ambition to have 24 gigawatts of nuclear capacity by 2050, covering a quarter of the UK's electricity demand.

The roadmap reiterates our strong commitment to nuclear security and the peaceful uses of nuclear around the world.

D&I in nuclear

However, the enhanced innovation required to shape the future of nuclear security is only possible through the broad range of skills which arise from a diverse workforce.

We are committed to gender diversity in the field of nuclear security, and we are pleased to announce that the Global Women in Nuclear conference 2025 will be held in the UK.

We strongly support the Agency's continued efforts to support gender diversity in the field.

Transport

The UK remains committed to the secure transport of nuclear materials as an essential underpinning of peaceful uses of nuclear technology.

We are pleased to share the signing of a new Practical Arrangement between Nuclear Transport Solutions and the IAEA.

As the Agency's only collaboration agreement on nuclear transport security, the agreement will enable the IAEA to use NTS experts at no cost.

We will also continue to support the universalisation of international conventions on nuclear security.

We strongly encourage the universal implementation of the International Convention on the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its Amendment. The UK also commits to adopt the recent revised text of INFCIRC 908 on Insider Threats and encourages others to do so.

The UK remains committed to effective nuclear security and the vital role of sharing information and identifying trends, which is why we remain a strong supporter of the Incident and Trafficking Database.

Chair,

We live in an increasingly volatile world.

The UK recognises the challenges of protecting nuclear security in areas affected by conflict and nowhere is that truer than in Ukraine.

We remain gravely concerned about the implications for nuclear security posed by Russia's illegal invasion of Ukraine and their continued military presence at Zaporizhzhia [Zap-or-ree-jha] Nuclear Power Plant.

Therefore, the UK supports IAEA DG Grossi's appeal to abstain from any action which could put safety of the plant at risk.

We will continue to provide financial support to Ukraine, and demand that Russia returns full control of the plant to Ukraine as the rightful sovereign owner.

Only then can we ensure its safe and secure operation.

Thank you Chair.