

UK National Statement to IAEA MCNE October 2017

1. Mr/Madam President, Excellencies, and distinguished guests
2. I would like to express my thanks to the IAEA for organising this event and the Government of the United Arab Emirates for hosting.

Energy Strategy and Vision for the Role of Nuclear Power
3. The United Kingdom remains committed to the Paris Agreement which calls on countries to keep global temperature rises below 2C. In addition, the UK has its own legally binding commitment to reduce carbon emissions by 80% by 2050 compared with 1990 levels.
4. The United Kingdom also recognises that safe and sustainable civil nuclear power can reduce energy import dependency and provide affordable and reliable electricity to consumers.
5. It is in this context that the United Kingdom believes nuclear power should be able to play a role in our future energy system.
6. Nuclear power has been part of the UK's electricity mix since 1957. Today it provides around 25% of total UK electricity output. However, by 2030 all but one of our existing reactors are set to close.
7. This is why we created a framework to allow industry to bring forward proposals for new nuclear power stations. Hinkley Point C, the first new nuclear power station in a generation, commenced construction last year. We look forward to industry progressing proposals for further new nuclear power stations.

8. We are committed to maintaining our leading role in nuclear training, research and recognise the role that innovative technologies, including Generation 4 reactors, fusion reactors, and SMRs, could have in the future.
9. We are also committed to supporting the IAEA's contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals through the peaceful application of nuclear technology in the fields of health, water resource management and food security, delivered by the Technical Cooperation Programme.
10. You will know that, as part of its withdrawal from the EU, the UK will also be withdrawing from Euratom. But I want to make clear our commitment to nuclear power remains undiminished and that we intend our relationship with the Euratom Community and IAEA to remain strong. Challenges for introducing, maintaining or expanding nuclear power
11. Nevertheless there are challenges. New nuclear power stations are significant undertakings with high upfront capital requirements and significant risk. In order to attract the necessary financing, the industry needs to demonstrate consistently that it can manage risk and build projects to time, budget and quality in order to attract the required investment.
12. As energy costs – especially renewables – come down, driven by competition and innovation, it is extremely important that the nuclear

industry continues to drive down costs in order to offer cost competitive low carbon electricity.

13. In the UK, we have to address legacy issues relating to the previous generation of nuclear reactors. And of course, across all sectors it is necessary to ensure we have the right skills for our future nuclear programme.

Expectations for the international community

14. If nuclear energy is to thrive it needs, at all stages, commitment to and implementation of the highest standards of safety and security and effective safeguards, which underpin international civil nuclear cooperation and trade. This must be consistent with national legislation and respective international obligations.

15. The United Kingdom notes transparency is vital to build trust and public confidence and encourage relevant stakeholders to promote transparency in their interactions with the public.

16. We also welcome international collaboration through the IAEA and other multilateral forums, as well as bilaterally, to promote peaceful use of new and existing technologies.

Closing

17. In closing Mr/Madame President, we welcome the work of the IAEA in supporting the safe and secure development of civil nuclear

power around the world, and wish this important Conference every success.