

**INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY
AGENCY**

GENERAL CONFERENCE 2017

NEW ZEALAND STATEMENT

Delivered by

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Madame President

New Zealand would like to congratulate you on your Presidency of this year's General Conference and we assure you and your Vice-Presidents of New Zealand's full support this week.

We also wish to extend a warm welcome the newest member of the IAEA Grenada.

Madame President, New Zealand approaches this week's General Conference with three aims:

Firstly, to underscore our full commitment to the International Atomic Energy Agency and the core principles that underpin its work. New Zealand is a strong advocate of the non-proliferation framework, and the critical importance of both disarmament and non-proliferation bears restating as the world finds itself again facing growing risks and tensions linked to weapons of mass destruction.

Secondly, New Zealand wishes to ensure that the work done in recent years in advancing the safety and security of nuclear materials is fully upheld and further developed. Nuclear materials pose significant risk and the highest possible standards must be in place, nationally and internationally, to ensure safety and security.

Thirdly, we there wish to acknowledge and support the work of the Agency in the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. While New Zealand has chosen not to use nuclear energy, we utilise a variety of other civilian nuclear technologies, and we recognise their importance to the SDGs including in our own region, the Pacific.

Madame President

With respect to our first aim – to support the fundamental principle of non proliferation – I would like to put on record New Zealand’s grave concerns about the situation in the DPRK. With its latest nuclear test, the DPRK has again demonstrated its complete disregard for international norms against the development and testing of nuclear weapons, and its obligations under United Nations Security Council and IAEA resolutions. New Zealand has strongly condemned this latest test as unacceptable and a highly dangerous affront to the entire global community, and urges the DPRK to cease further tests and comply with its international obligations.

On a positive note, New Zealand would like to welcome the fact that the Joint Comprehensive Programme of Action on Iran is delivering a process which is helping to defuse a very real proliferation risk in the Middle East. We encourage Iran to continue to engage fully with this process, and stress that full implementation is critical to maintain the trust and confidence of the international community. All Member States have a stake in the continuing and faithful implementation of the JCPOA, which strengthens the international

non-proliferation regime and makes an important contribution to regional peace and security.

On a further positive note, I am pleased to advise that New Zealand will be signing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons today in New York. As we all know, non-proliferation and disarmament are two sides of the same coin and New Zealand's signature of this Treaty reflects our conviction that it will make a valuable contribution to both. The Treaty has provided a sense of forward movement for many in the international community who remain deeply concerned about the risks inherent in nuclear weapons. The Treaty helps strengthen international commitment against nuclear weapons and as such is a major step in reinforcing the obligations contained in the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

I would like to take the opportunity, Madame President, to note New Zealand's views on the relevance of the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons to our work here in Vienna, in particular to the IAEA's mandate relating to nuclear safeguards. New Zealand is a steadfast supporter of robust safeguards – not least the Additional Protocol - to ensure the non-diversion of nuclear material from peaceful purposes. We cannot overstate the value we place in the Agency's role in this regard. We are pleased that the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons recognises and reinforces that work. We are also pleased that the new Treaty locks in the safeguards obligations that are in force for a State Party at the time of entry into force of the Treaty and also allows for future developments. In doing so, the Treaty reinforces and supports the safeguards system of the IAEA.

Madame President

With respect to our second aim – to enhance the safety and security of nuclear materials – I would like to reiterate New Zealand firm conviction that all countries developing and using nuclear energy must apply the highest standards of safeguards, safety and security through all stages of the fuel cycle, including waste management and transport. Although New Zealand has not chosen the road of nuclear energy, we – and many of our Small Island Developing State neighbours in the Pacific – would still suffer the consequences of a nuclear accident occurring in our region. This is particularly the case if an accident took place during the maritime transport of nuclear material through the Pacific. We greatly value the dialogue between coastal and shipping states which has done a lot to build confidence and communication channels on this issue in recent years. New Zealand also strongly supports efforts to improve the international nuclear liability regime, including through INLEX, so that it addresses the concerns of states – particularly non-nuclear states – which might suffer damage as the result of nuclear accident.

Madame President

Like nuclear safety, nuclear security is an issue of global importance and New Zealand considers the Agency's work on nuclear security to be indispensable. We recently hosted an IPASS mission to New Zealand which was very beneficial and we encourage other states to consider taking advantage of this opportunity to strengthen national nuclear security regimes. New Zealand has made regular contributions to the IAEA Nuclear Security Fund and I am pleased

to announce today a further contribution of \$150,000 in support of the Agency's work on nuclear security. We are also pleased to continue our collaboration with the US Department of Energy and the Government of Australia on nuclear security issues.

As to our third aim, we recognise the commendable efforts of the Agency in non-power applications. The recent visit to the Pacific by Director General Amano provided an excellent opportunity to highlight the work the Agency does in this area and its relevance to our region.

New Zealand works closely with the Agency in a range of peaceful use activities, in support of our agricultural sector, pest management, food traceability, authenticity and prevention of chronic diseases. New Zealand has also supported the IAEA to study biological processes affected by pollution of the world's oceans. We are also pleased to support the IAEA's ReNUAL project to modernise the Nuclear Applications Laboratories in Seibersdorf.

In closing Madame President

New Zealand is committed to achieving a constructive outcome on the range of complex and important issues on the agenda of this 61st General Conference and we look forward to working with all Member States of the IAEA to achieve our shared objectives.

Thank you.