

Euratom Research and Training in Safety of Reactor Systems (FISA 2022) and Radioactive Waste Management (EURADWASTE'22), organized by the CEA and the European Commission

**Knowledge Sharing: a key to addressing the world's biggest needs**

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RECORDED REMARKS

Excellences, ladies and gentlemen, it's a pleasure to address you today. I thank France for hosting this important gathering and for inviting me to be part of it.

As nuclear technology advances, safety and waste are two critically important areas to get right.

Clear and substantial progress has been made in safety, in new reactor designs, fuel cycle options, and in Small Modular Reactors. Clear and substantial progress has also been made in Radioactive Waste Management. From Finland, Sweden, and France, to Switzerland and Canada, projects at their various stages are moving in the right direction. Some are already very close to becoming real solutions to one of the biggest issues raised every time nuclear acceptance is debated.

Today you have the chance to share your experiences, the lessons you have learned, the progress you have made and the future you envision. It's on this topic of knowledge-sharing that I would like to focus my remarks. Let me give you three different examples.

Let me start with sharing our work with the wider public. While nuclear waste and safety lurk in the shadows of ordinary people's minds, they will remain things to fear and barriers to acceptance. I

urge you to take what you do out into the wider world. Making it more visible to the public is how we demystify nuclear and allow people to make decisions based on science, rather than fear or ideology. It's also a way to reach students and young professionals who may otherwise not know what an exciting and important sector they could join.

Secondly, let me speak about sharing our experiences and progress with those who have less and need more. You of course know the IAEA's important work in formulating safety standards and security guidance. Another core part of the IAEA's mandate is to help Member States gain access to the many benefits of nuclear science and technology, and to assist them in the essential areas of safety, security and safeguards. Knowledge-sharing is a big part of how we do it.

ARTEMIS, for example, is a key collaboration between the IAEA and the European Commission, offering an integrated expert peer review service for national radioactive waste and spent fuel management, decommissioning and remediation programmes.

As you make progress in your areas and share your experiences through the IAEA and in other ways, you allow emerging programmes to become safer and more effective. That not only makes the world a better place, but also secures your own

investment in nuclear. As we have experienced in the past, when nuclear energy programmes work well across the world, everyone benefits; and when accidents happen, the entire sector is effected.

As my final example, let me raise something else that you are doing this week: sharing knowledge and experience across the sector. FISA will present advances in technology that need to consider not only safety, but also radioactive waste management solutions before they are needed. Working across different parts of the sector, we all learn from the past and get better at anticipating the future.

For an IAEA example, there's our Nuclear Harmonization and Standardization Initiative. It brings together policy makers, regulators, designers, vendors and operators from around the world to develop common regulatory and industrial approaches that I am confident will facilitate the safe and efficient deployment of SMRs and other technology.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The better and the more we share our knowledge and experience, the better and more nuclear can help address some of the world's biggest challenges.

For the past weeks I have seen it up close. Safety, security and safeguards experts from across the world have been part of the IAEA's intense efforts to assist Ukraine's operators and regulators.

The conflict in Ukraine has had a big impact well beyond its borders. Today we face not only the disastrous consequences of climate change, but also the first global energy crisis. Together these twin emergencies have turned the spotlight firmly back on nuclear energy. We are at a crossroads and I am hopeful that these disasters – they are disasters, especially for developing countries - will push us towards a more sustainable energy path that includes more nuclear.

From France, Belgium and the UK, to Brazil, South Korea and Japan, leaders are looking to nuclear. They are working on extending the lives of existing nuclear power plants; building new ones; and investing in research and technology.

Economists broadly agree that, if countries are to meet their economic and climate goals, global nuclear capacity will need to double. That growth will only be possible because it is able to build off the important work you have been doing on reactor safety, waste management and in preparing the next generation that will lead these sectors into the future.

In closing, let me again acknowledge our host. France has long played a leading and very visible role in nuclear. Last year I had the chance to discuss the agenda with President Emmanuel Macron. A highlight of my visit was the time I spent at the Saclay Plateau, seeing the cutting-edge collaboration between educators, researchers, start-ups and industry.

The investments and decisions France and countries with established nuclear power programmes make, not only impact their own journeys, but also the journeys other countries take.

The world needs more technological progress; more advances in safety; a bigger and more diverse workforce; and more ways to minimize and manage the waste that will be created...before it is created.

What you do here and how you share what you do, is an integral part of meeting that need. So, I thank you and wish you successful FISA and EURADWASTE conferences.