

2025 Pugwash Conference on Science and World Affairs

**We walk through perilous times by recognising limitations and  
keeping our eyes on our common objectives.**

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**Director General**



**IAEA**

**International Atomic Energy Agency**

WRITTEN STATEMENT

Distinguished colleagues,

For nearly seventy years, Pugwash has demonstrated that the pursuit of peace must rest on knowledge, dialogue, and moral courage.

First of all, I would like to thank Paolo Cotta-Ramusino for his long and distinguished stewardship of Pugwash. I extend my warmest regards to Dr. Karen Hallberg on her appointment as your new Secretary-General. Her leadership, scientific insight, and commitment to global cooperation will be strong assets.

The IAEA and Pugwash are both institutions determined that humanity's mastery of the atom should serve life and not destroy it.

At this time of conflict and division, what we do is extremely important.

At the IAEA, we are not only the world's nuclear watchdog, but also the global nucleus for the peaceful uses of nuclear technology and science.

While our inspectors are inspecting more material and facilities than ever, our safety experts are on missions at nuclear power plants on the front lines in Ukraine, and our scientists are supporting

countries in using the atom to improve crops, produce low-carbon energy, diagnose cancer, spot zoonotic diseases, and fight plastic pollution. It is in this way that we bring the NPT to life.

The NPT, though not perfect, has been remarkably effective for many decades. Today, it is under immense strain and not only because of challenges in the hotspots that make the news.

A worrying trend is that even in countries in good standing with their NPT obligations, open questions are being asked about whether it would be a good idea to acquire nuclear weapons.

This is a slippery slope. The NPT needs everyone's support. At the Nobel Peace Prize Forum in Oslo last December, I said that we needed to walk through perilous times by recognising limitations and keeping our eyes on our common objectives. Fulfilling the bargain of the NPT must remain our objective. It is the best path we have. We must learn from what happened here 80 years ago. It is no coincidence that the Nobel Peace Prize last year honoured the Hibakusha and I am glad that today you will have another opportunity to hear their indispensable message.

May we heed their warnings and do everything in our power to walk the right path. Thank you.