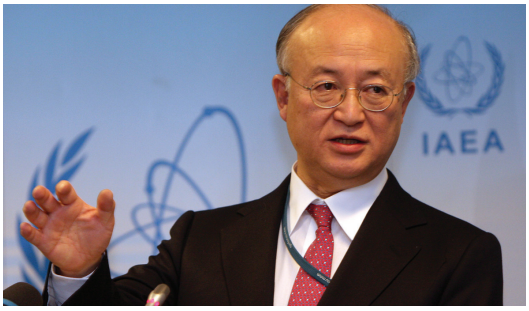
The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty: Promoting the Peaceful Use of Nuclear Energy



"We should build a new framework for civil nuclear cooperation, including an international fuel bank, so that countries can access peaceful power without increasing the risks of proliferation. That must be the right of every nation that renounces nuclear weapons especially, developing countries embarking on peaceful programs... We must harness the power of nuclear energy on behalf of our efforts to combat climate change, and to advance peace and opportunity for all people."

— President Barack Obama

The Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT) rests on three interrelated and mutually reinforcing pillars: nonproliferation, peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and disarmament.

Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Energy

Article IV of the NPT acknowledges the right of all Parties to develop nuclear energy for peaceful purposes, in conformity with their nonproliferation obligations and to participate in exchanges of related material and information. In the 40 years since the NPT's entry into force, cooperation in this area has grown tremendously. Today, peaceful nuclear applications improve the daily lives of people all around the world.

Challenges

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy are helping to address modern challenges such as climate change, energy security, and sustainable development. The benefits are clear, and we must work with all NPT parties to ensure continued access to them without increasing the risk of nuclear proliferation.

U.S. Actions in Support of the NPT's Peaceful Uses Pillar

- The United States has formal agreements for cooperation with almost 50 states, and U.S. technical agencies have agreements with over 40 countries.
- The United States is working with other states to develop mechanisms to guarantee states reliable access to nuclear fuel.
- The United States is expanding cooperation programs aimed at civil nuclear infrastructure development for countries newly considering nuclear power.
- As the largest donor to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and its Technical Cooperation (TC) program, the United States contributed about $235 million for TC programs between 2000 and 2009. These contributions have enhanced the peaceful-uses capabilities of more than 100 IAEA Member States in fields such as nuclear power infrastructure, health care and nutrition, water resource management, food security, sustainable development, and nuclear safety and security.

Peaceful Uses – Making an Impact

Activities supported by the United States include:

- Sterile Insect Technique (SIT): The United States has contributed more than $3 million to the IAEA project to integrate SIT for tsetse fly eradication in Ethiopia's Rift Valley, which will positively impact cattle production and the standard of living for local families.
- Program for Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT): The United States has contributed almost $1.2 million to PACT, which aims to establish safe and effective radiotherapy programs, providing higher quality treatment to cancer patients worldwide.
- Support for nuclear power infrastructure: The United States has launched regulatory building pilot programs in Armenia, Kazakhstan and Vietnam; is helping establish a Virtual Reactor Laboratory for education in Jordan; and has held regional workshops on infrastructure development.

For more information about the NPT, please visit http://www.state.gov/t/isn/npt/index.htm