

## **Multilateral co-operation on energy security: Germany, Netherlands, United Kingdom declaration in support of Article IV of the NPT**

We, the Foreign Ministers of the Federal Republic of Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, are brought together by the Treaty of Almelo, which forms the basis for our collaboration in uranium enrichment through the joint industrial enterprise known as Urenco.

We wish to congratulate the International Atomic Energy Agency on its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary and use this opportunity to set out our thinking on a matter of common interest.

We have actively participated in the ongoing discussions on non-proliferation, the strengthening of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and recent developments in the area of nuclear energy.

The NPT sets out the right of signatories to the peaceful use of nuclear energy, consistent with their non-proliferation obligations. The Federal Republic of Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland as possessors of advanced enrichment technology, feel a special responsibility to develop multilateral cooperation in this area.

Long term uncertainty over the availability and affordability of fossil fuels seem likely to encourage some States to consider the development of civil nuclear power. It is important that this is consistent with the highest non-proliferation standards. As the Director-General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) has noted, nuclear fuel cycle technologies pose specific proliferation risks, which we should seek to minimise, while continuing to uphold States' rights under the NPT.

We warmly welcome the role that the IAEA has played in promoting discussion of multilateral approaches to the nuclear fuel cycle, including nuclear fuel assurances. We understand that countries do not wish to renounce the possibility of developing fuel cycle activities. We do not ask them to do so. However, for many States, a back-up mechanism may strengthen the case for not developing such capabilities. Effective fuel assurances should help to promote States' confidence in the security of their fuel supplies, reducing the perceived need for indigenous fuel cycle technologies. They could reduce proliferation risks whilst increasing energy security and reducing their costs. We consider it of utmost importance that these schemes are developed on a non-discriminatory basis. They should be designed to foster mutual confidence.

The UK, Germany and the Netherlands, as hosts to the Urenco enrichment plants that fall within their jurisdiction and considering the international obligations they have undertaken as parties to the Treaty of Almelo, declare their readiness to contribute to IAEA discussions on the development of guarantee schemes and the multilateralisation of nuclear fuel cycle activities.

As an example of this active participation the Enrichment Bond initiative put forward by the United Kingdom is designed to promote energy security, by providing a robust back-up guarantee against politically motivated interruptions of uranium enrichment services. We stand ready to develop this initiative further. As a more long-term solution, Germany is developing the idea of establishing an international uranium enrichment centre under the

exclusive control of the IAEA (Multilateral Enrichment Sanctuary Project - MESP). We stand ready to support the IAEA in this regard.

We welcome opportunities to discuss this issue with other States, especially those considering the establishment of new civil nuclear capabilities. We are prepared to discuss the broad principles, as well as the terms of the Enrichment Bond and MESP.