Good Morning Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of the International Atomic Energy Agency, it is my pleasure to welcome you to the 15th INPRO Dialogue Forum on Sustainable Supply Chains for Advanced Nuclear Power Systems.

The International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles or “INPRO” was launched in 2000 by an IAEA General Conference Resolution with the objective to assist Member States to ensure that nuclear energy is sustainable and remains available through the 21st century.

To accomplish this, INPRO supports Member States in their long-term planning for deploying sustainable nuclear energy.

It provides direct support related to advanced and innovative nuclear energy system scenario modelling, analysis, and sustainability assessment.

This support is provided by using the INPRO Methodology and through facilitating dialogue, cooperation and collaboration among Member States
in their respective roles as nuclear technology developers, suppliers and customers.

Within the INPRO frame, this Dialogue Forum addresses issues germane to the further sustainable development of nuclear power systems and the related complex and deep relationships of technology suppliers and their customers.

Properly understood, most of the nuclear technology developing Member States are also the largest technology suppliers and customers in today’s global nuclear economy.

For those Member States that are purely customers of nuclear technology or interested in eventually developing nuclear power programmes, it is important that they become knowledgeable customers so that they can effectively engage with their suppliers to provide maximum value to their own energy economies.

This Dialogue Forum is part of that process of engagement.

Over the past few decades, the nuclear supply chain has experienced significant changes. Common new challenges include reductions of manufacturing capacity in some countries, effects of shortened product life cycles such as rapid advances in information technology, and increasing globalization of the supply chain.
There is a mixed reality. While new Member States and suppliers are coming into the market, which improves diversity and resiliency, the construction and operation of NPPs have been impacted by some significant procurement-related events.

For example, there have even been temporary shutdowns of a few NPPs because of discovery of counterfeit or substandard items, which is a vice affecting many industries today and the nuclear industry has not been entirely immune.

QC standards verifications and policing are being tightened in response.

Many countries tend to put great emphasis on localisation of the supply chain in order to maximize the social and economic benefits of a nuclear power project through the expanded use of national and local resources.

This is in the immediate interest of the Member State and is understandable and commendable.

Where we need to be prudent is in the determination of how quickly a shift to nuclear quality standards – that is: near zero defects – can be accomplished in a given local supply chain.

Fortunately, there are all sorts of services and products necessary for a nuclear power project so a prudent delineation between external and local supply chains can be accomplished and the local economy and community can be optimally served.
It is essential to disseminate good practices and lessons learned with respect to procurement and supply chain issues among owner/operator organizations, regulatory bodies, suppliers, auditors, and other stakeholders throughout the nuclear industry.

A reliable, robust and sustainable nuclear supply chain is an integral and vital part of the global nuclear energy industry system.

For all these reasons, the INPRO Steering Committee endorsed the organization of an INPRO Dialogue Forum on Sustainable Supply Chains for Advanced Nuclear Power Systems to be held in 2018.

This INPRO Dialogue Forum will be a good opportunity to discuss the supply chain of nuclear products and services that are currently supplying the construction of advanced nuclear power systems, which includes most NPPs under construction today and all projects in the future.

For technology suppliers and newcomer countries either developing their first NPP project, or interested to do so in the future, this meeting will provide a forum to exchange information on national and international supply chain related issues and good practices.

I wish you all a successful Dialogue Forum and a very enjoyable stay in Vienna.

I now declare the 15th INPRO Dialogue Forum open and turn the meeting over to the Chairman and Scientific Secretaries.