

**26th INPRO Dialogue Forum on the Deployment of Nuclear
Energy Systems for Applications Beyond Electricity**

Opening Remarks (recorded)

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Dear colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

Good morning!

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 26th edition of the INPRO Dialogue Forum, even if only virtually.

My sincere thanks to each of you for joining. My deep appreciation goes out to our host, the Government of the Kingdom of Thailand and the Thailand Institute of Nuclear Technology. I thank in particular Professor Yodchanan Wongsawat, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Higher Education, Science, Research and Innovation. I also thank Associate Professor Thawatchai Onjun, Executive Director of Thailand Institute of Nuclear Technology and Honorary Chair of this Forum. Their commitment and generous support have made this Dialogue Forum possible.

Let me begin with what is happening around us.

Global electricity demand is rising at its fastest pace in decades. Almost 40 countries have endorsed the goal of tripling nuclear capacity by 2050. After years on the margins, nuclear power is firmly back in national energy plans.

But electricity is only one part of the problem. Electricity accounts for roughly one fifth of the world's final energy consumption. The rest is heat, transport fuel and industrial feedstock. That is where emissions are hardest to remove. Steel, cement, chemicals, refining and shipping account together for close to a third of global emissions.

No credible path to achieving our climate goals goes around those sectors. It must address them directly. And the non-electric applications of nuclear energy are the only tools we have that reach that far.

This is where INPRO, and this Forum, earn their place. Nuclear energy can supply industrial process heat. It can produce low carbon hydrogen. It can desalinate water. It can work alongside renewables in integrated and resilient energy systems. Interest is no longer the story. Deployment is.

Consider what is already running. In China, the Haiyang Nuclear Power Plant supplies district heating to around 400,000 residents, cutting coal consumption and improving local air quality. In India, where hydrogen demand will rise sharply over the coming decades, research is under way on nuclear pathways to low carbon hydrogen. These applications are not yet widespread. They are already working. Taken to scale, they can transform industries, sustain communities and speed the transition to a cleaner and more secure energy future.

Dear colleagues,

Realizing these opportunities requires a sustainable approach to nuclear energy development. It calls for long-term strategic planning, integrated institutional frameworks, and policies that are aligned with national energy strategies and climate commitments.

This is INPRO's purpose. Since 2010, INPRO has hosted 25 Dialogue Forums to encourage cooperation, exchange experience and explore innovative solutions. It has helped Member States think in systems rather than in single projects.

This 26th Dialogue Forum comes at an important time. The technologies are maturing, experience is being gained, and new opportunities are emerging across different sectors. Windows like this one do not stay open indefinitely. The choices made in the next few years will decide whether nuclear energy serves the whole energy system or only a corner of it.

Technology alone will not be enough. Success will depend on strategic planning, supportive policies. On supportive policy. On regulatory frameworks fit for new applications. On cooperation and stakeholder engagement from the very start.

It will depend on closer alignment between technology developers, industry, governments, and, above all, future end users. Enabling policy environments, innovative business models and greater access to financing will be just as important as continued technological progress.

Your discussions this week will therefore be strategic as much as technical. You will exchange knowledge, share experiences and explore practical solutions to common challenges. By bringing together policymakers, regulators, industry, technology developers and end users, this Forum builds mutual understanding, reduces uncertainty and strengthens the partnerships that carry a technology from demonstration to deployment.

The IAEA stands with its Member States in this effort. INPRO's Key Indicators for Innovative Nuclear Energy Systems methodology, together with IAEA guidance and TECDOCs on cogeneration, hydrogen production and infrastructure development, give countries practical tools.

Tools to weigh options, identify gaps and decide on the evidence, according to their own national priorities and circumstances.

Ladies and gentlemen,

Momentum is not deployment. Turning one into the other will require vision, collaboration and long-term commitment. Forums such as this one play an important role in strengthening partnerships and turning ideas into practical action. INPRO has done this work for a quarter of a century. It is doing it here, this week. And it will be needed more, not less, in the years ahead. Forums such as this one turn ideas into action, and partnerships into projects.

Let me thank all of you for your participation and thank our hosts once **again** for making this event possible. I wish you a productive and inspiring week ahead.

Thank you.