

UK-FRANCE COMMUNIQUÉ FOLLOWING THE NUCLEAR ENERGY SEMINAR

The Rt Hon Grant Shapps, Secretary of State for the Department of Energy Security and Net Zero, and the Ministry for Energy Transition, Ms Agnès Pannier-Runacher, met on the morning of the High-level Bilateral Summit held by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and President Emmanuel Macron. After a bilateral discussion on energy issues, they hosted a Nuclear Energy Seminar with key stakeholders from both countries.

During this Seminar, both Ministers agreed to launch a partnership for strengthening bilateral cooperation on energy, focussing on three key pillars:

- Energy resilience, including energy security and electricity interconnection;
- Energy transition, low carbon technologies and domestic climate policies;
- Civil nuclear.

These pillars will support energy transition, transport and industry decarbonisation, renewable energy, notably offshore wind, renewable and low carbon hydrogen, carbon capture, usage and storage (CCUS), and energy efficiency. Both countries will cooperate in multilateral fora such as the North Seas Energy Cooperation (NSEC) to facilitate the development of offshore energy. Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to promote energy policies, technology and innovation that enhance energy transition and decarbonisation of our economies.

Both Ministers also affirmed the key role of nuclear energy, in particular its contribution to achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 and to enhancing energy security and sovereignty, highlighting the recent global events in Ukraine. Both noted their ambitions for domestic new nuclear as part of their net zero transition and energy security plans. In this context, they agreed on a specific Joint Statement on Civil Nuclear Energy. In particular, they reaffirmed their support to the Hinkley Point C construction project and continue to do their utmost towards a positive and timely 'Final Investment Decision' for the replica project of Sizewell C. Both Ministers agreed to establish a contact group on new build to explore interlinkages of their respective new nuclear projects.

As well as building on our successful industrial cooperation on nuclear new build projects, the Statement promotes exchange on broader areas of common interest. Both reaffirm the commitment in the Leaders' G7 Communiqué under the German Presidency in 2022 to further reduce reliance on civil nuclear and related goods from Russia and support countries seeking to diversify supply, as well as our cooperation on decommissioning and dismantling, waste management, research and development, supply chains, fusion, and safety. Additionally, both Ministers acknowledge that the delivery of respective ambitious nuclear programmes will be only possible with a strong, highly-educated and diverse workforce, and committed to further develop our cooperation on skills. They are especially proud of the success of the Franco-British initiative to promote the role of women in the nuclear sector.

Both Ministers expressed their desire to maintain and enhance their bilateral cooperation in the realm of civil nuclear energy and welcomed the informative and vital reflections of French and British industry and sector representatives at the seminar today (10 March 2023) on the topics of new build, skills, and research and development.

Both Ministers look forward to a Ministerial visit to Hinkley Point C, where they will continue their dialogue on civil nuclear and wider energy cooperation.