

Joint Statement on the Signing of the United States-Singapore 123 Agreement

July 31, 2024

The following statement was released by the Governments of the United States of America and Singapore on the occasion of the signing of the United States-Singapore 123 Agreement.

Today, on July 31, 2024, the United States and Singapore signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement, commonly known as a “123 Agreement”. The agreement was signed by United States Secretary of State Antony J. Blinken and Singapore Minister for Foreign Affairs Dr. Vivian Balakrishnan in Singapore. This agreement builds on the long-standing civil nuclear collaboration between United States and Singapore and outlines a comprehensive framework to deepen peaceful nuclear cooperation based on a mutual commitment to nuclear nonproliferation. Upon entry into force, the agreement will enable deeper nuclear cooperation, consistent with the highest international standards of safety, security, and nonproliferation, and build on our strong bilateral partnership.

The United States and Singapore collaborate closely on matters involving nuclear safety, security, and safeguards, including in regional and multilateral fora. Over the past decade, the United States has supported Singapore’s capacity building efforts to better understand the safety and reliability of advanced nuclear energy technologies. Since 2017, the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) and Singapore’s National Environment Agency (NEA) have had arrangements to collaborate on nuclear safety matters, and most recently held a joint workshop in July 2024 under these arrangements.

Through this agreement, as well as other capacity building initiatives, such as the Foundational Infrastructure for the Responsible Use of Small Modular Reactor Technology (FIRST) program, the United States and Singapore intend to further strengthen civil nuclear cooperation to better understand how advanced nuclear energy technologies, including small modular reactors, can potentially support climate goals, while balancing critical energy needs. This will support Singapore’s efforts to understand and evaluate advanced nuclear energy technologies, should viable options emerge.

Annex A: Factsheet on Civil Nuclear Cooperation with the United States

FACTSHEET ON CIVIL NUCLEAR COOPERATION WITH THE UNITED STATES

1. Singapore has signed a civil nuclear cooperation agreement, commonly known as a “123-Agreement”, with the United States, as part of our capability building efforts. In conjunction with this, Singapore will also join the US Department of State’s Foundational Infrastructure for Responsible Use of Small Modular Reactor Technology (FIRST) programme.
2. Singapore has not made any decision regarding the deployment of nuclear energy in Singapore. Any deployment decision will require detailed studies of the safety, reliability, affordability, and environmental sustainability of nuclear energy in our local context. Most designs of advanced nuclear reactors are still undergoing research and development and have not begun commercial operation.
3. Singapore is studying all potential options to decarbonise our power sector while maintaining our energy security and cost-competitiveness, as we work towards our target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050. We will build on our past efforts to develop capabilities and better understand global developments on advanced nuclear energy technologies. To that end, Singapore is open to considering collaborations with countries that can support our capability building in nuclear science and safety.

123-Agreement

4. Under Section 123 of the US Atomic Energy Act (1954), the US Government is required to conclude a peaceful nuclear cooperation agreement to formally engage partners in civil nuclear cooperation. The agreement requires partners to adhere to a set of non-proliferation requirements to guarantee that the information obtained through this agreement will only be used for peaceful purposes. These requirements broadly include (i) committing to the peaceful use of nuclear energy; (ii) adhering to International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) standards on the use and security of nuclear material; and (iii) restricting the enrichment, reprocessing, and re-transfer of material and equipment transferred under the Agreement.
5. The US has 24 active 123-Agreements (see Annex), including with:
 - a. ASEAN Member States: Indonesia, Philippines, Vietnam
 - b. Other Countries in Asia: China, India, Japan, Republic of Korea
6. After the signing of the US-Singapore 123-Agreement, it will need to be reviewed by the US Congress before it can come into force, which is expected to be by end-2024. Once in force, this agreement will last for 30 years and will facilitate Singapore’s access to detailed information on US nuclear energy technologies and expertise that are under export control. This agreement is also a prerequisite for Singapore to collaborate with other countries that use nuclear energy technologies and designs containing components or intellectual property of US origin. This will allow us to work more closely with US institutions, as well as civil nuclear entities in other countries. Such collaboration will facilitate Singapore’s capability building journey.

FIRST Programme

7. The US Department of State's FIRST programme supports partners to build capabilities to better understand Small Modular Reactors or other newer advanced nuclear energy technologies, as well as key issues such as nuclear safety, security and non-proliferation. The programme aims to support partners to understand the considerations behind making responsible nuclear power deployment decisions consistent with the highest nuclear security, safety, and non-proliferation standards.

8. Other countries such as Indonesia, Japan, Estonia, and the Philippines have also joined the FIRST programme.

9. Under the FIRST programme, Singapore will gain access to the network of US entities involved in civilian nuclear energy, including the US National Laboratories and companies developing newer nuclear energy technologies, to facilitate our capability building process. FIRST will also serve as a platform to coordinate US-Singapore civil nuclear cooperation.

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ANNEX A: Active 123 Agreements (in alphabetical order):*Source: US Department of Energy*

Partners	Entry into force	Expiration dates
1. Argentina	16 October 1997	16 October 2027
2. Australia	22 December 2010	22 December 2040 with rolling 5-year extensions
3. Brazil	15 September 1999	15 September 2029
4. Canada	21 July 1955	1 January 2030 with rolling 5-year extensions
5. China	29 October 2015	29 October 2045
6. European Atomic Energy Community (Euratom) ¹	12 April 1996	12 April 2026 with rolling 5-year extensions
7. India	06 December 2008	6 December 2048 with rolling 10-year extensions
8. Indonesia	30 December 1981	30 December 2031
9. International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)	07 August 1959	07 August 2054
10. Japan	17 July 1988	17 July 2018 but remains in force until terminated by a Party
11. Kazakhstan	05 November 1999	05 November 2029
12. Mexico	02 November 2022	02 November 2052
13. Morocco	16 May 1981	16 May 2021 with rolling 5-year extensions
14. Norway	19 January 2017	19 January 2047
15. Philippines	02 July 2024	02 July 2054
16. Republic of Korea	25 November 2015	25 November 2040
17. Russian Federation	11 January 2011	11 January 2041

18. Switzerland	23 June 1998	23 June 2028 with rolling 5-year extensions
19. Taiwan	22 June 2014	indefinite
20. Turkey	02 June 2008	2 June 2023 with rolling 5-year extensions
21. Ukraine	28 May 1999	28 May 2029
22. United Arab Emirates	17 December 2009	17 December 2039
23. United Kingdom	31 December 2020	31 December 2050
24. Vietnam	03 October 2014	3 October 2044 with rolling 5-year extensions

¹ *Euratom comprises the following Member States: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden.*