



JOINT CONVENTION NEWS

JOINT CONVENTION ON THE SAFETY OF
SPENT FUEL MANAGEMENT AND ON THE
SAFETY OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT



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INTRODUCTION & PURPOSE

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

CONTINUING ACTIVITY AS WE PREPARE FOR THE 6TH REVIEW MEETING

Over a year and a half has passed from our very successful 5th Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention in Vienna. Let me assure you that much activity continues as a result of our discussions.

At your direction, I am working to encourage other IAEA member states to become Joint Convention contracting parties, while at the same time gaining an understanding of the difficulties they face reaching such a decision. In September 2015, I had the opportunity to meet with several IAEA member states on the margins of the IAEA General Conference to discuss the benefits of membership to the Joint Convention. I plan to do the same at the September 2016 General Conference. In October 2015, South Africa hosted an IAEA regional promotional meeting for African nations. Many African nations sent colleagues, who were eager to share their thoughts and experiences. In conjunction with this meeting, IAEA obtained feedback via a pilot survey of member state awareness and perceived difficulties joining the Joint Convention. We learned that most member states had knowledge of the Joint Convention and that difficulties in becoming a party often involve lack of political support and available resources.

In May 2016, I participated in the Review Meeting of IAEA Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources and discussed the advantages of Joint Convention membership and heard from many IAEA member states. Many more member states belong to the Code of Conduct, which has non-legally binding reporting requirements. This venue also provided a great opportunity to share experience and hear about the difficulties which face colleagues, particularly those nations dealing only with radioactive sources.

These outreach and promotional efforts are continuing to focus attention on member states becoming contracting parties and in turn our understanding of their difficulties. Since the 5th Review Meeting, four new contracting parties have deposited their instruments at IAEA: Botswana (August 2015), Peru (February 2016), Jordan (April 2016), and Lesotho (September 2016). I look forward to welcoming their delegations at the May 2017 3rd Extraordinary Meeting and Organizational Meeting for the 6th Review Meeting. We now have 73 contracting parties, and I hope more will join us by that time.

In December 2015 we bid a fond farewell to Ms. Gabriela Siraky, who served us well as our Coordinator at IAEA for the 3rd through 5th Review Meetings. Her dedication to the Joint Convention was highly commendable. We welcome Ms. Sandra Guepel as IAEA's new Coordinator for the Joint Convention. Many of you may recall that Sandra served as the coordinator of Country Group 1 during the 5th Review Meeting. I look forward to working closely with her in planning our upcoming meetings.

Also at your direction, a Joint Convention topical meeting has been organized. Mr. Andrej Stitar of Slovenia graciously accepted my invitation to chair the organizing committee. The committee has been very busy planning the topical meeting on "Challenges and Responsibilities of Multinational Radioactive Waste Disposal Facilities" for September 2016, and I look forward to its conclusions.

Finally, a working group met in October 2016 to focus on issues raised during the 5th Review Meeting Open Ended Working Group regarding adherence of contracting parties and particularly focusing on member states without a nuclear power program. Mr. Sigurdur Magnusson of Iceland chaired this effort, and we will receive their report in May 2017.

Thank you for your continuing commitment to the goals of the Joint Convention as we continue to advance the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management worldwide.

David Huizenga
President
Fifth Review Meeting of
the Joint Convention



PAST EVENTS & MEETINGS

FIFTH REVIEW MEETING (11-22 MAY 2015)

The Fifth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties pursuant to Article 30 of the Joint Convention was held in Vienna from the 11th to 22nd of May 2015. The President of the Review Meeting was Mr. David Huizenga, Principal Assistant Deputy Administrator for Defense Nuclear Non-proliferation at the National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA) of the United States Department of Energy (DOE). The Vice-Presidents were Mr. Myung Jae Song, President of the Korean Radioactive Waste Society, Republic of Korea and Mr. Philippe Jamet, Commissioner of the Nuclear Safety Authority, France.

Sixty-one of sixty-nine Contracting Parties attended the Review Meeting. Among these, seven Contracting Parties attended for the first time. National Reports were provided by 65 out of 69 Contracting Parties. The Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) was present at plenary sessions as an observer.

Since the Fourth Review Meeting, various Contracting Parties have made good progress and had significant accomplishments in implementing their national programmes. Major progress has been made in:

- National policies, strategies and programmes for spent fuel and radioactive waste management;
- Demonstration of efforts to enhance openness, transparency and public involvement process;
- Safety improvements in the storage and regulatory control of disused radioactive sealed sources;
- Construction and commissioning of storage facilities for spent fuel and radioactive waste and disposal facilities for low and intermediate level waste;
- Safety as well as emergency preparedness and response improvements in light of the Fukushima Daiichi accident;
- Research and development activities for spent fuel and radioactive waste management;
- Progress made on remediation of legacy waste sites;
- Expanded use of international cooperation and published peer reviews;
- Recruiting, training and maintaining human resources to address emerging issues and expanding programmes;
- Review of arrangements related to funding of decommissioning activities; and
- Minimisation of radioactive waste.

It had been decided at the Second Extraordinary Meeting in May 2014, to revise and clarify the meaning of the term 'Good Practice' with respect to the Joint Convention. This new



definition was applied for the first time in this Review Meeting. The results from the review sessions of the Joint Convention demonstrated inconsistencies across the Country Groups with respect to the identification of Good Practices. The Fifth Review Meeting recognised the need for improving the harmonisation between the Country Groups in the identification of Good Practices.

During the Review Meeting, Contracting Parties confirmed the actions that they had undertaken to re-evaluate the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management facilities in light of the Fukushima Daiichi accident. The importance of this issue was highlighted by the fact that the Fifth Review Meeting included a Topical Session on 'Progress on Lessons Learnt from the Fukushima Daiichi Accident.'

The Country Groups identified overarching issues resulting from cumulative discussions throughout the first week. The Contracting Parties highlighted these areas on overarching issues during the closing plenary. The overarching issues considered most relevant were:

1. Staffing, staff development, funding, and other human resource areas;
2. Maintaining and increasing public involvement and engagement on waste management to provide public confidence and acceptance;
3. Developing and implementing a holistic and sustainable management strategy for radioactive waste and spent fuel at an early stage;
4. Management of disused sealed sources;
5. Contingency plans for management of radioactive waste from a significant nuclear or radiation accident;



6. Management of and funding for decommissioning waste; and
7. Feasibility of a regional or multinational disposal facility.

In addition, the Contracting Parties agreed that National Reports for the next Review Meeting should, as appropriate, address the first four overarching issues listed above.



REGIONAL PROMOTIONAL MEETING IN SOUTH AFRICA (6-8 OCTOBER 2015)

A Regional Meeting to promote the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management was held from the 6th to 8th of October 2015 in Centurion, South Africa. Mr. David Huizenga, President of the Joint Convention 5th Review Meeting, chaired the meeting which focused on promoting membership and informed African nations about the benefits of the Joint Convention and encouraged them to access the Convention as Contracting Parties.

TOPICAL MEETING UNDER THE JOINT CONVENTION: CHALLENGES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF MULTINATIONAL RADIOACTIVE WASTE DISPOSAL FACILITIES (5-7 SEPTEMBER 2016)

The Topical Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (Joint Convention) was organized at the IAEA's headquarters, in Vienna. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss, within the framework of the Joint Convention, safety challenges and responsibility issues related to the disposal of spent fuel or radioactive waste in a country other than the one where they were generated, as requested by the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention at their Fifth Review Meeting. The meeting was attended by 75 delegates, representing 29 Contracting Parties and one international

organization, the Nuclear Energy Agency of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD/NEA).

On day one there were detailed presentations that included IAEA safety framework and guidelines, EU legal framework, existing international practices and experiences (return of spent fuel from research and power reactors to the countries of its origin, ongoing international initiatives, licensing of the ITER facility), challenges and lessons learned around multinational repository development, the Finnish and French experiences with national deep geological disposal, and finally, the initiative of developing an international radioactive waste disposal site being considered by South Australia.

On day two there was a moderated session on roles and responsibilities in the case of a multinational radioactive waste disposal facility and their transfer that resulted in robust and extensive discussions. In addition, presentations included an overview of liability issues relating to multinational radioactive waste disposal facilities (including closed disposal facilities), methods of financing, application of the polluter pays principle, EURATOM's programme on research and training, high level waste disposal solution developments in China, and the siting process and public involvement in the Republic of Korea and Switzerland.

Participants felt it would be extremely helpful to further examine issues related to international arrangements for the disposal of spent fuel and radioactive waste. Presentations and the chairman's report were made publicly available.

TOPICS OF INTEREST

SIXTH REVIEW REPORT CHANGES

As agreed to at the Second Extraordinary Meeting, the Guidelines regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports (INFCIRC/604/Rev.3) would take full effect for the Sixth Review Meeting. Contracting Parties had the option of implementing the changes made for their National Reports for the Fifth Review Meeting given that some Contracting Parties were already well advanced in the process of drafting their National Reports.

The next addition to INFCIRC/604 is not a new concept as it has already been verbally made to Contracting Parties in past Review Meetings of the Joint Convention, but INFCIRC/604 has been revised to include an annex about how Contracting Parties are encouraged to make their National Reports and Questions and Answers publicly available.

For the Sixth Review Meeting, when Contracting Parties begin to write their National Reports, the recent revisions made to INFCIRC/604/Rev.3 will most affect sections E and K. These changes are captured below.

SECTION E: LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY SYSTEM

New to this section on the legislative and regulatory system, Contracting Parties should summarize the means by which the effective independence of the regulatory functions for spent fuel management and radioactive waste management is ensured; and the actions to improve the transparency in regulatory activities and communications with the public (para. 23 INFCIRC/604/Rev.3).

SECTION K

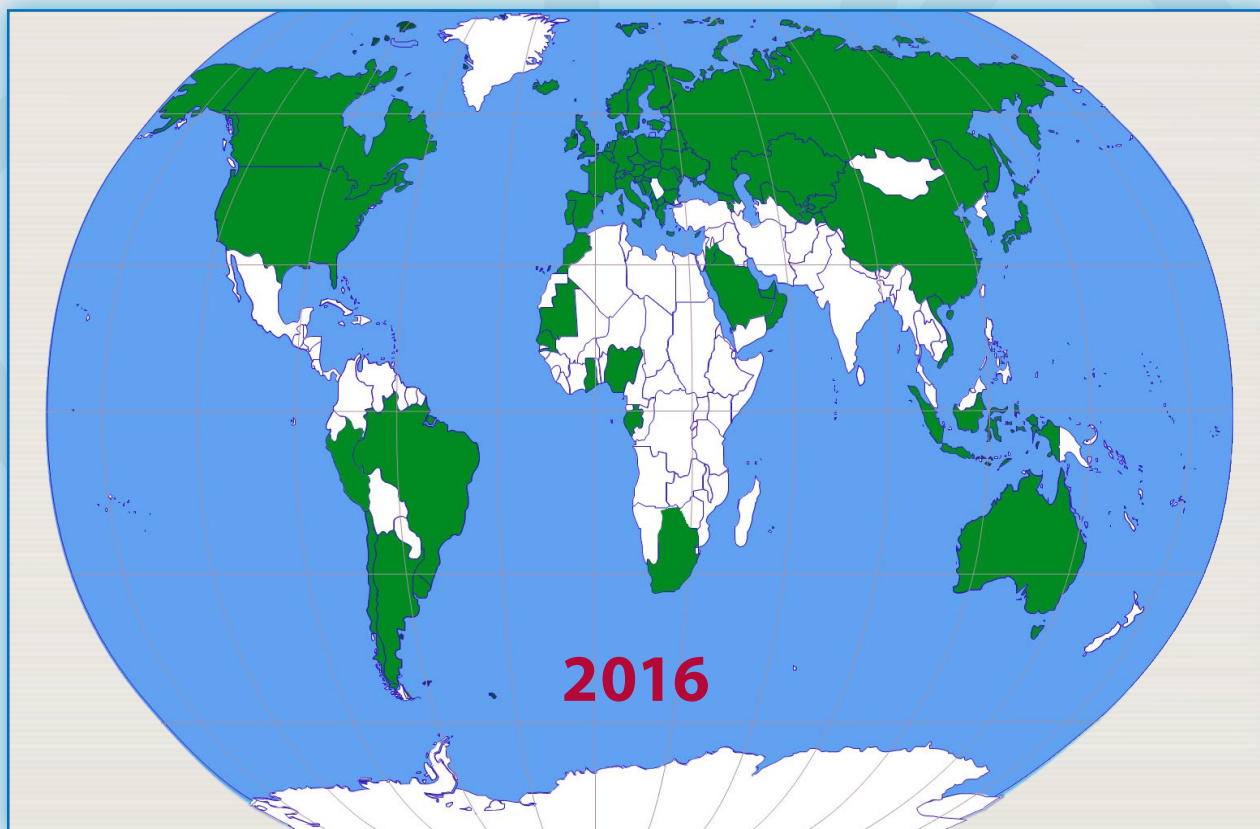
The first item to note for Section K is the title change from 'Planned Activities' to 'General Efforts to Improve Safety.' A series of suggestions (para. 35-36 INFCIRC/604/Rev.3) have been made for Contracting Parties to consider when writing their National Reports, such as:

- Summarizing the measures taken to address suggestions and challenges identified at the previous Review Meeting;
- Summarizing strong features in current practices, possible areas for improvement and major challenges/plans to address;
- Including a description of policy, plans and schedules for international peer reviews and follow-up missions, as applicable;
- Including measures taken by Contracting Parties to voluntarily make these reports public; and,
- Any actions taken to enhance openness and transparency in the implementation of the obligations under the Joint Convention.

As a general note when writing National Reports, Contracting Parties should include reference to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Safety Fundamentals and Requirements when reporting on the obligations of the Joint Convention (para. 14 INFCIRC/604/Rev.3).



STATISTICS



FOUR NEW CONTRACTING PARTIES

The Joint Convention consists of 73 Contracting Parties as of December 2016 (subject to the entry into force). Four new Contracting Parties have joined since the last issue of *Joint Convention News* in May 2014.

RECENTLY JOINED CONTRACTING PARTIES		
Continent	Country	Entry into force
Africa	Botswana	12 November 2015
South America	Peru	08 May 2016
Asia	Jordan	14 July 2016
Africa*	Lesotho	25 December 2016

* Note: The dates when the accession of these countries enter into force must be taken into account with regard to the date of publication of this issue of *Joint Convention News*.

SIXTH REVIEW PROCESS SCHEDULE

21 MARCH 2017

Deadline for Submission of Nominations for President and Vice-Presidents

21 APRIL 2017

Deadline for Submission of Nominations for Chairs, Vice-Chairs, Rapporteurs and Coordinators

16-17 MAY 2017

Third Extraordinary Meeting

18-19 MAY 2017

Organizational Meeting for the Sixth Review Meeting

23 OCTOBER 2017

Deadline for Submission of National Reports

23 FEBRUARY 2018

Deadline for Submission of Questions and Comments on National Reports

23 APRIL 2018

Deadline for Submission of Answers for National Reports

21 MAY 2018

Commencement of the Sixth Review Meeting

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Thank you to the Contracting Parties who contributed to this issue of Joint Convention News.