

IAEA NSSC NETWORK NEWSLETTER

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Chair's Welcome

As the Chair of the NSSC Network, I am pleased to highlight the progress that [the International Network for Nuclear Security Training and Support Centres \(NSSC Network\)](#) has made towards achieving major objectives since the previous publication of this Newsletter in April 2021.

In response to the ongoing COVID-19 global pandemic, the NSSC Network has continued to identify, develop, and use effective methods of collaboration. In April, we held our first ever virtual Annual Meeting, and while we had to manage some of the usual challenges and limitations with conducting an online event, the meeting was successful in achieving its objectives and in moving forward with further development of the Network. During the meeting, we welcomed three new Member States and three new official Observer organizations to the Network. During the meeting, we hosted a panel session on NSSC efforts to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, including presentation of the results of a survey carried out by NSSC Network Working Group C on this subject. The IAEA and the Network Bureau also facilitated an interactive exercise for the participants using hypothetical scenarios based on the IAEA publication [Establishing and Operating a National Nuclear Security Support Centre \(IAEA-TDL-010, Revision of IAEA-TECDOC-1734\)](#). Additionally, we discussed a framework for cooperation with our colleagues in the [International Nuclear Security Education Network \(INSEN\)](#). As a result, NSSC Network and INSEN have agreed on an informal memorandum for cooperation to serve as foundation for further collaborative activities between the two Networks.

One of the key updates during the Annual Meeting was about the development of a new Nuclear Security Training and Demonstration Centre (NSTDC) at the IAEA's laboratories in Seibersdorf. The IAEA presented its plans for the centre to serve as a flexible and neutral venue with suitable equipment and infrastructure to conduct hands-on activities during select training courses and other technical activities in nuclear security, including research on advanced and emerging topics. The Agency emphasized that the new NSTDC at Seibersdorf will complement the infrastructure and capabilities commonly found in organizations in States, such as NSSCs, and that cooperation and coordination with the NSSC Network will be essential going forward. To that effect, the IAEA held a series of virtual Consultancy Meetings between April and August with experts from NSSCs and other Member States organizations to discuss various technical aspects related to the centre. Additional information on the NSTDC, including on the [ground-breaking ceremony held in July](#), can be found in this issue.

In August and September, our focus turned towards facilitating regional cooperation among NSSCs, in line with the Working Group A Action Plan. The first week of September, the Asia Regional Network of NSSCs (ARN) and IAEA had a virtual meeting to review progress in the development of cooperation among the ARN members and to further facilitate coordination on planning and implementation of regional and international activities for nuclear security. The ARN members shared best practices and lessons learned, and discussed ongoing challenges that each centre has faced in implementing training programmes and other activities during COVID-19. The ARN members and the Agency also discussed plans and preparations for jointly conducting a regional workshop and technical exchange on human resources development for NSSC Network Members in Asia and the Pacific, to be hosted at China's State Nuclear Security Technology Center in June 2021. Additionally,

In early September, the IAEA hosted a virtual Consultancy Meeting to facilitate NSSC Network Regional Cooperation in Africa. The Network members from Africa discussed existing needs and gaps and explored possible opportunities for collaboration and sharing of resources for further development of NSSCs. The participants collaborated to identify the existing technical capabilities of the centres in Africa and discussed plans for possible joint support activities, as well. And I'm very pleased to announce that during this meeting the participants decided to establish an official Africa regional group within the NSSC Network.

In parallel, NSSC Network members continued to gather and share new best practices and lessons learned from their operations. The *In Focus* article in this Newsletter edition focuses on one such good practice identified by an NSSC in Ukraine in developing a new, advanced facility to help meet expanding needs of national stakeholders. Following this example, I recommend that all Network members document their own experiences and good practices and consider sharing them in future *In Focus* articles and in the NSSC Network [Library of Lessons Learned and Case Studies \(LiLLaCS\)](#).

Looking ahead, we have a busy schedule of important activities planned for the months to come. In December we will hold the NSSC Network Bureau meeting, in February we hope to finally implement our pilot regional workshop on IAEA-TDL-010 at Egypt's NSSCs in Cairo – after experiencing delays due to COVID-19 –and in April we plan to celebrate the 10-year anniversary of the NSSC Network at the Annual Meeting, to be held in-person in Vienna.

Finally, I strongly encourage the Network members to make regular updates to and refer to the Network's information management tools, the [NSSC Network Database](#) and [Network Calendar](#). And as always, I would like to thank all contributors to this issue, especially the leadership of Working Group C and the IAEA for their ongoing cooperation and support for development of our Newsletter. The next issue is expected in Spring 2022, which will be posted on <https://www.iaea.org/services/networks/nssc>.

*NUSEC and NSSC Network webpage access is available only for Members of the NSSC Network and participants of NSSC Network meetings.



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