



GOV/INF/2000/17-GC(44)/INF/8
18 July 2000

International Atomic Energy Agency
BOARD OF GOVERNORS
GENERAL CONFERENCE

GENERAL Distr.
Original: ENGLISH

Sub-item 14(b) of the Conference's provisional agenda
(GC(44)/1)

**MEASURES TO STRENGTHEN INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION
IN NUCLEAR, RADIATION AND WASTE SAFETY**

RADIOLOGICAL PROTECTION OF PATIENTS

BACKGROUND

1. In its resolution GC(43)/RES/12, the General Conference requested the Secretariat “to organize as soon as feasible, in close collaboration with the World Health Organization and within the Agency's current budgetary resources, an international meeting on the radiological protection of patients for the purpose of an exchange of information and the development of recommendations, as appropriate, regarding the radiological protection of patients” and “to consider ways of providing financial support in order that participants from developing countries may attend the above-mentioned international meeting”. Also, it requested the Director General “to report to it at its forty-fourth (2000) regular session on the implementation of this resolution.”
2. During the discussion of the draft version of resolution GC(43)/RES/12 in the General Conference's Committee of the Whole, the representative of Spain in the Committee said that “Spain would be happy to host the international conference envisaged in its operative paragraph 1.”¹

MAIN DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE GENERAL CONFERENCE'S 1999 SESSION

3. On 15 February 2000, the Spanish Minister of Health confirmed that Spain agreed to host an International Conference on the Radiological Protection of Patients in Torremolinos (Málaga), Spain, from 26 to 30 March 2001.
4. Pursuant to one of the General Conference's requests, the Secretariat sought the collaboration of the World Health Organization, which has agreed to co-sponsor the Conference. The European Commission and the Pan American Health Organization have also agreed to co-sponsor it.

¹ See document GC(43)/COM.5/OR.2, para. 11.

5. The first meeting of a Programme Committee, convened by the Secretariat to advise on the content and format of the Conference, was held in Vienna on 6 and 7 March 2000.

6. An *Announcement and Call for Papers* for the Conference, approved by the Programme Committee, was sent to Member States on 29 March 2000.²

7. The main topics to be covered by the *International Conference on the Radiological Protection of Patients: Diagnostic and Interventional Radiology, Nuclear Medicine and Radiotherapy* are:

1. Radiological protection of patients in general diagnostic radiology
2. Radiological protection issues in specific uses of diagnostic radiology, such as mammography and computed tomography (with special consideration of the impact of digital techniques)
3. Radiological protection in interventional radiology, including fluoroscopy not carried out by radiologists [*this topic will cover the radiological protection both of patients and of staff carrying out interventional radiology*]
4. Radiological protection of patients in nuclear medicine
5. Developing and using guidance (reference) levels for medical exposures in radiology and nuclear medicine examinations
6. Radiological protection of the embryo and foetus in pregnant patients
7. Radiological protection of paediatric patients
8. Radiological protection of patients in radiotherapy (including the prevention of exposures differing from prescription)
9. Radiological protection of patients in biomedical research
10. Influence of standardization in the design and development of medical radiological equipment on the radiological protection of patients
11. Education, training and continuous professional development in the radiological protection of patients
12. Topics for research and development in the radiological protection of patients

8. The Secretariat has contacted 74 professional societies with a view to ensuring wide dissemination of the *Announcement and Call for Papers*. These societies cover a broad spectrum of professionals dealing with the medical applications of radiation - including

² An updated *Announcement and Call for Papers* will be prepared and made available to Member States by the Secretariat in due course.

radiologists, nuclear medicine specialists, radiation oncologists, medical physicists, technologists/radiographers, radiological protection officers, equipment manufacturers, experts who develop radiological protection standards, hospital administrators and governmental officials (for example, regulators and health policy-makers).

9. The deadline for the submission of papers is 1 November 2000, and a meeting of the Programme Committee for paper selection purposes is being planned for the first half of December 2000.

10. It may be recalled that the establishment of regulatory authorities for radiation protection and the establishment of medical exposure control programmes are two of the milestones of the Agency's ongoing technical co-operation Model Projects on upgrading radiation protection infrastructures.³ Activities relating to medical exposure control are being carried out with varying degrees of success in all the Member States receiving assistance through those Model Projects and in several other Member States receiving assistance through national and regional projects in the area of radiation protection in connection with medical practices. The Secretariat considers it important that representatives from these Member States attend the International Conference on the Radiological Protection of Patients and provide information on the progress achieved and difficulties encountered by them and learn from other participants about how to establish and maintain a sound medical exposure control programme. It is in this connection also that the Secretariat is looking into ways of facilitating the involvement of developing countries in the Conference, the programme of which will be highly relevant to the milestones referred to above.

³ Within the framework of these Model Projects, 52 Member States (17 in Africa, 11 in Europe, 10 in Latin America, 5 in East Asia and 9 in West Asia) are receiving assistance with the creation of infrastructures designed to meet the requirements of the International Basic Safety Standards for Protection against Ionizing Radiation and for the Safety of Radiation Sources or with the improvement of their existing infrastructures.