

# General Conference

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## Sixty-eighth regular session

# Committee of the Whole

## Record of the Fifth Meeting

*Held at Headquarters, Vienna, on Wednesday, 18 September 2024, at 3.15 p.m.*

**Chair:** Mr LODDING (Sweden)

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<sup>1</sup> GC(68)/21



**Abbreviations used in this record**

ARTEMIS	Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management, Decommissioning and Remediation
ICONS	International Conference on Nuclear Security
INPRO	International Project on Innovative Nuclear Reactors and Fuel Cycles
IRMIS	International Radiation Monitoring Information System
IRRS	Integrated Regulatory Review Service
TECDOC	technical document
UK	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
USA	United States of America



## 14. Nuclear security (continued)

(GC(68)/7; GC(68)/INF/3 and 6; GC(68)/COM.5/L.15)

1. The CHAIR suggested that the Committee resume its consideration of the draft resolution on nuclear security contained in document GC(68)/COM.5/L.15.
2. Turning to paragraph (dd) bis, he invited the Committee to consider a modified Iranian proposal that read, “Noting the growing interest of Member States in the development and deployment of small modular reactors (SMRs) and other new reactors, and emphasizing the importance of nuclear security considerations in this context within their national security regimes”.
3. The representative of PAKISTAN said that the proposed wording was acceptable, but suggested replacing “national security regimes” with “national nuclear security regimes”.
4. The representative of AUSTRIA said that consultations were ongoing to further modify the wording and that an update would be provided to the Committee in due course.
5. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA requested more time to review the proposal.
6. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, while recognizing that consultations were ongoing, said that the proposed wording was already very good. It could be further enhanced, however, by removing “of Member States” from the first line and replacing “their national security regimes” with “Member States’ nuclear security regimes”.
7. The representative of EGYPT said that the version of paragraph (dd) bis in the draft resolution initially presented to the Committee had been based on the hard-fought negotiations held within the framework of ICONS 2024 — during which many concessions had been made, including by his own country. His delegation would engage constructively to reach a consensus, but he suspected that the initial wording would ultimately be the best way forward.
8. The CHAIR said that the wording agreed upon within the framework of ICONS 2024 was not acceptable to all members of the Committee and that it was necessary to find a mutually agreeable solution.
9. The representative of SWITZERLAND said that, while lengthy discussions had been held previously, the initial wording in the draft resolution was not acceptable to all delegations. He expressed appreciation for the modified proposal and for the amendment suggested by the Russian Federation, which left it open as to where exactly interest in the development and deployment of small modular reactors was growing. His delegation could accept the proposed wording as amended by the Russian Federation.
10. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA expressed concern that, if the initial version of paragraph (dd) bis were to be completely reformulated, the meaning could be altered and the delicate balance lost. With a view to addressing at least some concerns without fundamentally changing the meaning of the paragraph, she proposed using the initial version as a basis and amending the end of the paragraph to read “in accordance with Member States’ respective obligations and national nuclear security regimes”.

11. The CHAIR said that the initial version was not acceptable to certain delegations and that the Committee should therefore work on the basis of Iran's proposal, as modified.

12. The representative of AUSTRIA said that his delegation could not accept "Emphasizing the growing interest of Member States", as originally proposed by Iran, but could accept "Emphasizing the importance of nuclear security considerations", as per the tabled version.

13. The representative of KAZAKHSTAN, echoing the comments made by the representatives of Egypt and Switzerland, said that following lengthy discussions in the context of ICONS 2024, it had been possible to reach a compromise, as reflected in paragraph 12 of the Co-Presidents' statement. While recognizing the concerns of certain delegations, he proposed retaining the initial version of paragraph (dd) bis, which was almost identical to paragraph 12 of the Co-Presidents' statement.

14. The representative of IRELAND said that his delegation was very attached to the original wording of paragraph (dd) bis and had some reservations regarding the structure of the version proposed by Iran. He looked forward to further proposals, but could also accept the wording proposed by the representative of the USA.

15. The representative of the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA said that extensive discussions had been held during the open-ended working group meetings as to whether to change the wording agreed at ICONS 2024. It had been agreed that the wording represented a delicate balance and would stand the test of time.

16. The representative of EGYPT said that his delegation was not in position to accept the proposals made by Iran and the USA. The priority for his country was to retain the original wording relating to Member States' obligations, without adding new wording about national nuclear security regimes.

17. The CHAIR, noting that Iran's proposal to begin the paragraph with a factual reference to the growing interest in the development and deployment of small modular reactors was not acceptable to all delegations, encouraged further consultations.

18. He invited the representative of Iran to provide an update on paragraph (nn).

19. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that, following consultations with other delegations and in the interests of consensus, his delegation wished to propose only a minor change — to replace "Welcoming the activities undertaken by Member States" with "Welcoming the efforts of Member States". The word "activities" was not clear to his delegation, and "undertaken" implied some kind of obligation; the aim of his proposal was therefore to avoid any misunderstanding. He added that his country's preference had been to place greater focus on international cooperation and assistance; however, it was willing to compromise.

20. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that, in her view, the amendment proposed by Iran did not add clarity — if anything, it added an element of ambiguity. As the problem appeared to be linguistic, she suggested working further on the wording to find a solution.

21. The representative of FRANCE, speaking in her national capacity, said that, for the sake of compromise, her delegation could likely accept the use of "efforts" as proposed by Iran. However, the word "undertaken" should be retained.

22. The representative of SWITZERLAND said that his delegation could accept the use of "efforts".

23. The CHAIR asked the representative of the UK whether her delegation could accept the replacement of "activities" with "efforts".

24. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that her delegation needed some time for consultations.

25. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION, turning to paragraph 64, proposed aligning the wording “prevention, detection, deterrence, access delay and response” with that appearing in paragraph (g), which was slightly different.

26. The CHAIR, noting that the change appeared to be acceptable to the Committee, said that the Secretariat had taken note of the Russian Federation’s proposal.

**The meeting was suspended at 3.45 p.m. and resumed at 4.15 p.m.**

27. The CHAIR, drawing attention to paragraph (nn), asked the representative of the UK whether her delegation could accept the replacement of “activities undertaken by” with “efforts of”, as proposed by Iran.

28. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM said that consultations were ongoing, but proposed simply deleting the word “undertaken” so that the start of the paragraph would read “Welcoming the activities of Member States”.

29. The representative of IRELAND, supporting the UK’s proposal, said that the word “efforts” somewhat weakened the sentiment originally expressed in the paragraph.

30. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that the UK’s proposal was acceptable to his delegation.

31. The CHAIR said that the wording of paragraph (nn), as amended, appeared to be acceptable to the Committee.

32. He said that the draft resolution on nuclear security would continue to be the subject of consultations among Member States.

### **13. Nuclear and radiation safety (resumed)** (GC(68)/11; GC(68)/INF/2; GC(68)/COM.5/L.9)

33. The CHAIR invited the representative of Iran to present his delegation’s proposals on the draft resolution on nuclear and radiation safety contained in document GC(86)/COM.5/L.9.

34. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, referring to paragraph 54, recalled that the wording in the previous year’s resolution on nuclear and radiation safety<sup>2</sup> related only to IRRS and ARTEMIS missions, while the current wording broadened the scope to cover peer review missions in general — including IRRS and ARTEMIS missions. He proposed that previous year’s wording be reinstated, with the addition of the phrase “and to adjust their guidelines to best meet Member States’ needs”. The paragraph would therefore read: “Requests the Secretariat to continue improving the effectiveness and efficiency of Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) and Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management, Decommissioning and Remediation (ARTEMIS) peer review missions, including the back-to-back IRRS-ARTEMIS missions which take place when requested by a Member State, and to adjust their guidelines to best meet Member States’ needs, using lessons learned from relevant past experiences, in close cooperation with Member States”.

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<sup>2</sup> GC(67)/RES/7

35. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that the proposed wording was, in principle, acceptable to her delegation, but that the reference to back-to-back IRRS-ARTEMIS missions should be removed.
36. The CHAIR said that paragraph 54, as amended, appeared to be acceptable to the Committee.
37. He invited the representative of Iran to continue through his proposed amendments.
38. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, turning to paragraph 63, proposed the deletion of the phrase “to develop technical documents”.
39. The representative of CHINA, supported by the representatives of the UNITED KINGDOM, SWITZERLAND, the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, FRANCE and PAKISTAN, said that many countries developing fusion energy and technology faced regulatory challenges and that there was a need to develop standards to guide practices in that area. Owing to a lack of experience in the use of fusion energy, those standards needed to be drawn up on the basis of a set of technical documentation that drew in particular on industry expertise from a number of different Member States. It was appropriate for the Agency to conduct work in that area and to reference that work in the draft resolution. His delegation was, however, flexible with regard to how that work was referred to in the text.
40. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, while recognizing that there was a need for documents to guide Member States in the deployment of fusion energy, said that the term “technical documents” was problematic for his delegation. He proposed replacing it with “relevant documents”.
41. The representative of CHINA said that the term “relevant documents” could indeed encompass technical documents. At the same time, however, it should be clear to the Secretariat what exactly was being referred to. He requested assistance in finding a solution that was agreeable to all.
42. The representative of the UNITED KINGDOM suggested that the Secretariat might be able to assist.
43. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN suggested that the delegations of China and Iran discuss the matter further and present an alternative proposal.
44. The CHAIR said that the Secretariat could guide those discussions.
45. The representative of AUSTRALIA supported the proposal to seek guidance from the Secretariat. While the inclusion of the term “technical documents” had been a Chinese proposal, the wording of paragraph 63 had been very closely negotiated by a number of delegations and reflected many different points of view. On that basis, any consultations held should involve all interested parties.
46. The representative of SPAIN proposed replacing “technical documents” with the broader term “publications”.
47. The representative of CHINA, welcoming the proposal by Spain, said that the Committee was close to reaching a consensus but that further discussions were needed.
48. The CHAIR said that the Secretariat was looking into the matter raised and invited the representative of Iran to continue through his proposed amendments.
49. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, turning to paragraph 81, proposed replacing “safe storage” with “safe management”, in line with IAEA Safety Standards Series No. GSR Part 5.



50. The representative of ITALY said that his delegation had a preference for retaining the word “storage”, which better reflected the drafters’ intentions.
51. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that, while his delegation endeavoured to accommodate all proposals made, it was important to ensure technical accuracy. He therefore supported Iran’s proposal, which directly referenced a specific document.
52. The representative of AUSTRALIA, speaking in her national capacity, drew attention to IAEA Safety Standards Series No. SSG-60, which featured the technically correct phrase “storage of residues”. Given that storage and management were two distinct concepts, she supported retaining the existing wording of paragraph 81.
53. The CHAIR encouraged interested delegations to continue their consultations.
54. Turning back to paragraph 63, he invited the Secretariat to provide input.
55. The HEAD OF THE PROGRAMME AND STRATEGY COORDINATION SECTION said that it was usual practice, prior to developing Agency safety standards, to prepare TECDOCs that drew on the experience of Member States. Two TECDOCs relating to fusion safety were currently being prepared — one on design safety and safety assessment and another on the regulation of fusion facilities.
56. The representative of the RUSSIAN FEDERATION said that he understood that the TECDOCs referred to were being prepared within the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security and that the Department of Nuclear Energy was also preparing a number of fusion-related documents, including at least one INPRO case study. Since it was clear that the Secretariat was well aware of what Member States expected of it, perhaps a more general term could be used in paragraph 63 that encompassed all the various documents currently being prepared and to be prepared in the future.
57. The CHAIR invited the representative of Iran to continue through his proposed amendments.
58. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, turning to paragraph 88, proposed adding the word “guidance” before “document” in the second line, as per the previous year’s wording.
59. The representative of AUSTRALIA said that the delegation of Argentina — whose representatives were currently not present in the room — had worked very closely with the Secretariat on the wording of paragraph 88 and had decided to omit the word “guidance”. She was prepared to consult with the Argentine delegation in that regard and provide more information to the delegation of Iran.
60. The CHAIR invited the representative of Iran to continue through his proposed amendments.
61. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN, turning to paragraph 142, said that, while his delegation had a preference for reinstating the previous year’s wording, it had accepted the proposed addition of “and upgrading the performance of”. At the same time, the phrase “in order to meet the needs of Member States in this regard” should be inserted after the reference to IRMIS.
62. The CHAIR said that paragraph 142, as amended, appeared to be acceptable to the Committee.
63. He asked the representative of Iran if he had any other proposals.
64. The representative of the ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN said that, with the exception of paragraph 95 — on which his delegation and others were holding consultations — his remaining proposals related to open paragraphs.
65. The CHAIR, thanking delegations for their flexibility, emphasized the importance of reaching a consensus on the three draft resolutions not yet recommended to the General Conference for adoption.

**The meeting rose at 5.05 p.m.**