

Uranium Mine Productions to Meet Growth Needs

Sufficient uranium resources have been identified to meet demand in even high case growth scenarios, explained Jan Slezak, Uranium Resource Specialist at the IAEA's Nuclear Fuel Cycle and Materials Section, during a roundtable discussion with industry, government and regulator experts from various countries held at the margins of the *54th IAEA General Conference* on 22 September.

"Uranium mine production is planned to increase in a number of countries, including Russia, Niger, Namibia, Australia, Canada and Kazakhstan, to meet the needs of an expected increase," he said.

However, several challenges remain despite strong market conditions. These include high production costs, a thin supply chain, aging facilities and workforce, shortage of new and experienced staff for the expansion as well as geopolitical issues.

Mr. Slezak was presenting the results of the latest edition of the *Red Book*, a biennial publication covering costs of production, current global base and distribution of global uranium resources.

Participants to the meeting pointed out that information sharing and networking between industry and regulators is one of the most important aspects needed to confront the issue of the global shortage of expertise in the field of uranium mining.

The roundtable discussion was hosted by the Permanent Mission of Australia. At the meeting, representatives of the Australia Uranium Association encouraged the IAEA to provide regulatory frameworks guidance to the uranium industry.

Background

Uranium 2009, Resources, Production and Demand, otherwise known as the *Red Book*, is jointly produced by the IAEA and Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD).

-- By Sarah Poe and Giovanni Verlini, IAEA Division of Public Information