Ms Carr gave a presentation explaining the conclusions drawn from the ITB survey

571 and the referred Guidelines, which made an appraisal of provide recommendations on the different protective

572 actions in case of emergency according to the evidence assessment protocol used by WHO methodology (GRADE approach), using the WHO evidence-based methodology to draw conclusions

573 about the effectiveness of those protective actions and to give recommendations about its implementation. Afterwards an intense debate

574 followed, mainly regarding the referred Guidelines document.

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576 Ms. Heinrich asked about the status of development of the document and how was the document expected to be useful regarding supporting GSR Part 7

577 implementation. The presenter replied that the current version of the document was mainly focused at elaborates at length on

578 the process followed and very little about includes conditional recommendations based on low-quality evidence, according to the evidence assessment protocol used by WHO methodology (GRADE approach). Ms. Buglova

580 highlighted that the IAEA participated as an observer in different meetings about

581 the ITB topic. However, regarding the Guidelines document, she emphasized that in her opinion, the GRADE

582 methodology used was not applicable to appraise effectiveness of other protective

583 actions in case of emergency, as it and may provided misleading results on this regard. Finland

584 raised the point that during emergency decisions should be made rapidly based on

585 existing information and not on the considerations included in the Guidelines. Also

586 she raised the problems that these Guidelines may involve regarding lack of

587 consistency with the instructions to be given by the Public Health Authority. The

588 presenter replied by saying that the main purpose of the guidelines is to support national plans for emergency response at the preparedness stage, and was to provide information on all pro-s and con-s of the decision making when planning for emergency response, so that it could be useful for the development of MS EPR arrangements. She also said that WHO was open appreciates to this kind of feedback as it will give a chance to improve the document. Mr.

589 Martincic, from the IEC, emphasized the point that the methodology used in the

590 Guidelines was not applicable to protective actions in case of radiation emergencies,
leading to misleading results that do more harm than good. The presenter acknowledged the need to further elaborate on the text making sure that methodology is explained in a clear way, since there is still misunderstanding related to the GRADE methods which is widely used in clinical medicine and bio-medical research. Ms. Nestoroska-Madjunarova expressed her concerns that in its current state the Guidelines document provided recommendations which would be not useful and could create confusion among member states by including recommendations inconsistent with international safety standards. The presenter replied that the methodology used by the experts in the drafting of the documents is based on the WHO criteria for evidence-based guidance and all WHO recommendations now follow the same protocol. Germany suggested that this evidence-based methodology could be indeed adequate for other WHO documents on medical topics but not in this case, because conclusions which are based on a very limited and insufficient data will not be valid. Germany suggested that may be this evidence-based methodology is indeed adequate for other WHO documents on medical related topics but perhaps not in this case, emphasizing the fact that with so few valid data, the conclusions which are based on a very limited and insufficient data are not valid, useless. The presenter confirmed that the document was based on the WHO standard protocol for developing guidance, and indeed, according to this protocol, the systematic reviews described in the Guidelines resulted on a very limited evidence, graded as a low- and very-low quality evidence. However, the formal protocol applied by the WHO is not modifiable and all guidelines produced by the WHO must follow the same protocol. Mr. De la Vega subscribed to the opinions reservations raised about the lack of applicability of the WHO’s methodology used for this case and about the misleading results obtained. He also emphasized that the use of this GRADE methodology approach could complicate and hinder cooperation and synergies between EPREV and Joint Evaluation (JEE) if the JEE missions were to apply this document. The presenter replied that there was no mechanism foreseen to implement the
conclusions of the document in WHO peer review missions. JEE evaluations are carried out based on the national capacities for preparedness and response to health emergencies, but are not evaluating the detailed content of national response plans. Canada asked about whether WHO would consider the outcome of an EPREV in subsequent JEE missions to the country. The presenter replied saying that if WHO has access to a previous EPREV report they would use it for JEE. United Arab Emirates raised the point that the module of JEE on radiation emergencies was very similar to EPREV and some coordination and cooperation between IAEA and WHO was needed to avoid duplication. The presenter agreed with this point. Ms. Buglova again explained her view stating that the methodology used in the WHO Guidelines document was not applicable to protective actions in radiation emergencies and the conclusions of the document would not be useful for policy makers. She referred to the case of implementation of EU BSS Directive as an example where this document could be harmful. The presenter replied that she agreed with the need of continuing the discussion and requested the Committee members to provide feedback about the document. Belgium subscribed to the idea that the approach used in the development of the guidelines is not applicable to radiation emergencies. The presenter replied that WHO had used this methodology in the case of chemical and natural disasters. Ms. Nestoroska-Madjunarova highlighted again the importance of the consistency of the conclusions of the document with GSR Part 7 cosponsored by WHO and other Safety Standards in the EPR field. The presenter replied that she agreed with this comment. Respected those opinions and looked forward to further cooperation. FAO asked about WHO internal regulations addressing other kind of emergencies and how did those documents fit to this one. The presenter replied that the methodology was the same but the information used was different since it was referring to other aspects.