

## Opening of the Organizational meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

Dear Mr President, my dear colleagues, welcome in Vienna!

It is a great pleasure for me to open this Organizational Meeting of the 4<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

This year the Joint Convention is in its 10<sup>th</sup> year of implementation but unfortunately this anniversary is marked by a major event that directly affects Japan and has consequences for us all. The Fukushima accident, following the Tohoku earthquake and tsunami, has raised in particular a lot of questions regarding spent fuel management.

It is essential that, once the situation is completely analyzed and understood, lessons are learnt from this event and measures are taken to further improve the safety of spent fuel management, as well as possibly the Global Nuclear Safety Framework.

And I am convinced that the next review meeting will have to address these issues.

In May next year, the 4<sup>th</sup> Review Meeting of the Joint Convention will take place here in Vienna. Throughout the 10 years of experience on the Joint Convention and the 3 previous Review Meetings, the application of Joint Convention and the review process have been maturing.

The objectives of the Review Meetings are now to discuss improvements made by contracting parties on the safety of spent fuel management and on the safety of radioactive waste management, as well as to ensure the continuous and effective implementation of the safety provisions of the Joint Convention.

In this way, Review Meetings are certainly not organized to judge or blame contracting parties, but are rather a forum where we all work together towards improving the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management.

Organizational Meetings are set up to prepare these Review Meetings of the Joint Convention.

They contribute, in addition to the Officers Meetings which will take place immediately after - namely tomorrow - to improving the review process, by capitalizing on the experience gained from previous Review Meetings and by benefiting from the feedback from previous officers.

Today you will elect the President of the new Review Meeting of the Joint Convention, 2 vice-presidents as well as country group chairs, co-chairs, coordinators and rapporteurs

I would like to insist on the essential role of these officers in the success of the Review Meetings of the Joint Convention - Being an officer for the Review Meetings means a strong involvement and careful preparation.

The Joint Convention is an important instrument which aims at achieving a high level of safety worldwide in spent fuel and radioactive waste management. However, despite an increasing number of Contracting Parties, as it is illustrated by your attendance today, new accession remain a constant objective. The work done by the secretariat is essential for this but your role as Contracting Parties is also to promote the Joint Convention and stimulate other member states to be part of the Joint Convention.

In this regard, the success of the Review Meetings, which will be guaranteed by your strong involvement, will contribute to show other potential Contracting Parties that accession to the Joint Convention is beneficial.

Then, on a more practical point of view, I would like to stress that the organization of the Review Meetings of the Joint Convention are highly demanding, not only in terms of human resources - and the secretariat once again is covering this point - but also in terms of financial resources.

In particular, every 3 years, when organizing the Review Meeting of the Joint Convention, the issue of interpretation costs is raised.

The cost of interpretation is the highest expenditure for the Review Meetings and since the first Review Meeting, with an

increasing number of Contracting Parties – a good thing in itself - this cost has steadily increased – a not so good point. This year, the estimated interpretation costs represent more than 60% of the overall cost of the review meeting.

As a consequence, every 3 years, we in the secretariat have difficulties in covering this interpretation-cost and I would like to ask you to consider contributing to cover this cost through extra-budgetary funds.

In conclusion, before returning the floor to the President of the meeting to cover the 11 points of the Agenda, I would like to deeply thank Mr Soda and all the officers of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Review meeting of the Joint Convention, which will today “pass the torch” to the officers of the 4<sup>th</sup> review meeting of the Joint Convention.

Oh, ...and one more thing, just to mention that Mr Soda has kindly proposed to provide an updated information on the Fukushima Accident. Consequently, we are organising a side event in this Board Room on Wednesday 11 May at 14.00 after the end of the Organizational Meeting. Fukushima related activities under the CNS will be presented at the same time by Miroslav Svab.

I wish you all the best for your meeting. Thank you for your attention.