

International Technical Experts Conference on Border Management

First Session: Border Management and Security – Identifying the Issues and Challenges

DDG-NS keynote presentation (DRAFT)

Distinguished participants,

It is an honour to address you on behalf of the IAEA at such a timely and important conference. Like you, the Agency places great emphasis on effective border management and security, and such issues are an integral part of the Agency's overall strategy to address and enhance nuclear security. If you will permit me, I would like to provide you first with an overview of the Agency's efforts in the area of nuclear security more generally, as well as with respect to the particular challenges posed by border management.

Protection against nuclear terrorism is one of the critical issues facing the international community today. The events of 9/11 in the USA and successive events since then, including the latest very tragic one demonstrated a new scale, dedication and organization of terrorist groups. It is to a great extent as a consequence of these events, that new efforts and impetus have been given to our pre-existing security efforts, and it is, in turn, as a consequence of these efforts that we meet here today to discuss our experiences and identify further ways by which to address this shared threat. The events since 9/11, in short, prompted the international community to re-evaluate the threat posed by terrorism, including the potential threat to civilian nuclear programmes. This fact was not lost on the Agency, and the willingness of terrorists to sacrifice their own lives in the attempts to cause widespread death and destruction has prompted new nuclear security awareness.

The Agency has responded with a comprehensive and proactive nuclear security programme.

The realities of today's environment in the post-9/11 period are less certain than they were in the bi-polar structure that dominated the international system after the Second World War. For nearly five decades States adopted stances of "nuclear deterrence" based on calculable threats that factored rational behaviour of known State-level adversaries. However, since the end of the Cold War, international relations have

become more complex and weapons ambitions are spreading. Today, increased risk for low-intensity national and regional conflicts has emerged with new and more dispersed threats involving a larger number of actors: criminal or terrorists, which make use of trans-border networks.

Nuclear security, in the post-9/11 period must consider and attempt to address four scenarios: 1) the theft of a complete nuclear weapon (this would obviously be the worst-case scenario); 2) the theft of nuclear material for the purpose of constructing a crude nuclear explosive device; 3) the theft of nuclear and other radioactive materials to construct a radiological dispersal device (or RDD), and, finally, 4) attacks or sabotage directed against a power reactor, a fuel cycle facility, a research reactor or a nuclear transport.

In order to prevent such events, strong actions are required at national, regional and international levels. A nuclear security regime, which is internationally accepted and consistently and comprehensively implemented in broad partnership should make malicious acts very difficult to pursue. It should also allow international cooperation for better identification and sharing of best practices to combat nuclear terrorism and proliferation.

To this end, the Agency has adopted an integrated, multi-track approach to assisting States in strengthening their nuclear security capabilities through a comprehensive Plan of Activities for Protection Against Nuclear Terrorism. This Plan covers measures to prevent, detect and respond to malicious acts involving nuclear and other radioactive materials. It embraces advisory, evaluation and training services as well as legislative and technical support, recognizing that strengthened security measures rely on recommendations and guidelines for reference and on a well-trained and motivated staff. The Agency's mandate, technical competencies, extensive experience and global reach make it an international organization that is particularly well-suited to assist States in improving their nuclear security systems.

Global nuclear security requires a multi-track and holistic approach in order to be truly effective. It includes efforts to prevent the spread of weapons of mass destruction and related material; the protection of sensitive equipment and

technologies; control of radioactive sources from cradle to grave; the detection of malicious acts involving nuclear and other radioactive materials; and emergency and incident preparedness to respond to and mitigate the consequences of any such acts. The Agency recognizes that border management and security, naturally, is an integral part of a comprehensive holistic approach to nuclear security.

The many cases of illicit trafficking in nuclear materials highlight the need for secure borders and international cooperation. The Agency's Illicit Trafficking Database, is the only such database in the world collecting authoritative and officially confirmed information on incidents involving illicit trafficking in nuclear and other radioactive materials, and contains approximately 600, confirmed cases of illicit trafficking, almost 60 of which had been reported during the first six months of 2004. The security of transport of nuclear and radioactive material through border checkpoints contribute to the complicated challenge of how best to strengthen the international physical protection regime. To interdict illicit trafficking, detection equipment should be available at borders, ports and airports and other monitoring points. The detection of attempts to smuggle nuclear and other radioactive materials at border crossings therefore remains an important aspect of the Agency's nuclear security programme, and the evaluation of States' capabilities to combat illicit nuclear trafficking constitutes an integral part of the Agency's International Nuclear Security Advisory Service, or INSServ. The Agency has assessed present capabilities to detect and respond to illicit nuclear trafficking across borders. Expert teams have worked with host country counterparts to identify requirements for improved detection capability and to identify the assistance needed to establish and sustain this improved capability. These measures are complemented by accountancy and protection of these materials at the source, from cradle to grave.

In addition, the Agency has provided, to a limited extent, equipment for detection of smuggling of radioactive substances at border crossing. For the 2004 Athens Olympics, which recently came to a very successful close, the Agency worked to assist authorities in detecting illicit trafficking through Greece's land border crossings, seaports and airports by supplying and installing radiation monitoring equipment. Moreover, such provision of technical support to train police, fire departments and customs officers is far from unique. The Agency supports "front line" officers in their

familiarization with detection and identification instruments by conducting two-week-long intensive training sessions. The courses' participants are then qualified to return to their organizations and provide training to other officers.

While, clearly, much work has been done in the post 9/11 period to address the challenge of nuclear security, challenges still remain. Training is still required, and activities to ensure that front line officers have access to, and understanding of, detection equipment must continue to be undertaken. The global security regime is only as good as its weakest link, and effective border management and controls depend upon the entire chain being strong.

This is especially true with respect to nuclear security – a context in which the stakes are too high for us to be content with partial measures. The consequences of an explosion of *one* crude nuclear device would be catastrophic, and the consequences of the sabotage of a nuclear facility or the explosion of a radiological dispersed device (RDD) may halt the development of nuclear technology for peaceful purpose and, in turn, may hamper socio-economic development. The threat of terrorism has not diminished, and therefore neither should our efforts to thwart it. Effective border management, in particular, depends greatly upon cooperation between States, at the international and regional levels, as well as at the national level and between international organizations. There is no final resting point at which success can be declared. Rather, success in this context can only be measured by the continuing lack of severe incidents. In the future, as now, the IAEA stands ready to assist in strengthening the chain of border security and calls upon all those concerned to do likewise, so that our progress in this area can continue.