

Convention on Nuclear Safety

4th Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties

IAEA 14-25 April 2008

Boardroom in C04

Vienna, Austria

Mr. T. Taniguchi's (DDG-NS) Opening Statement

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It gives me great pleasure to welcome all of you to the 4th Review Meeting for the Convention on Nuclear Safety. I would like to pass on the best wishes of the Director General ElBaradei, for a successful meeting.

As you all know, as of, April 2008 there were 65 signatories to the Convention; and 61 Contracting Parties. Today, it gives me great pleasure to note that now, all countries operating commercial nuclear power plants are Contracting Parties to the Convention.

In that regard please let me emphasize an issue of utmost importance to the future of the Convention:

Many Members States of the IAEA –as you certainly know - are now planning to go nuclear, thus creating a dynamic nuclear market worldwide. In the light of this reinvigoration of nuclear power development the CNS, as the major legally binding international instrument, should become the central tool or the key component for establishing a global nuclear safety regime to help improve safety performance and public confidence in nuclear power development. Therefore we face today a new challenge to rebuild momentum for implementing the CNS to address these new changes.

We all know that any serious accident anywhere in the world can result in the interruption of the future nuclear power development, which is required for improving worldwide energy supply and for addressing the challenges of global warming. Therefore, we must prevent such serious accidents through our utmost efforts at both the national and international levels.

The Secretariat is aware that there is a limited safety infrastructure in many of the countries that want to launch new nuclear power programmes and thus the IAEA wants to facilitate this process. The international nuclear community must help capacity building in those countries.

Moreover, the recent trends of multinational approach to design, construction and even operation of new NPPs add new challenges for the national authorities responsible for safety.

I personally believe that promoting the CNS is essential for reaching our shared goal of ensuring worldwide nuclear safety. Contracting Parties should act now and develop a political outreach process addressing the new countries embarking on new nuclear power programmes, but not yet full members of the CNS as Contracting Party.

Another very important issue is the issue of continuity. It is essential to the Review Process that the cooperation among Contracting Parties in the period between Review Meetings is maintained.

The President will address these issues more detailed in his opening statement.

The Secretariat has again identified issues and trends in nuclear safety. The report has identified safety-significant issues, as well as developments and trends related to the enhancement of nuclear safety. It was based on the concrete results of the safety related missions and services performed by the IAEA during the last three years. As requested, the Secretariat provided the report in time for the Contracting Parties to consider its findings in the preparation of their National Reports for this meeting. However, the preparation of this report is also an important opportunity for the Secretariat to review its own activities for the future.

In that respect, the IAEA is interested in the views of the Contracting Parties, for example:

- Was this report useful during the preparation of the National Reports?
- Do you address these issues in your presentation in the country group sessions?
- How could the report be improved? More specifically are there any new or missing trends and issues to be added or modified?
- Are there other similar activities that the Secretariat can pursue to assist you, the Contracting Parties, in the future?

You will further review this in the light of the complete set of questions and comments compiled by the coordinators as well as in the frame of the proposal on the format of country group presentations.

The sharing of information, such as those identified in this report would seem to be appropriate for conveying, not only throughout the nuclear community, but also to the wider general public. I am sure that your deliberations and discussions will be able to identify other areas of improvement for this and the next Review Meeting. It is through such efforts that the future direction for the Convention can be more clearly steered.

The concepts of international co-operation and safety related technical co-operation require a strong, sustainable and visible global safety regime that provides for the

protection of people and the environment. For this purpose, the Agency undertakes a major effort to develop a new overall structure for its safety standards based on the unified Safety Fundamentals. These new standards represent "good and best practices" in the nuclear community, as a common reference for the high level of safety required for nuclear activities, worldwide. I would also like to note the suite of safety services offered by the Agency to provide for the application of these standards. We have been working to better integrate our various services, particularly in the area of regulatory control, to strengthen the feedback mechanisms for continuous improvement and to more closely connect the IAEA's Standards with their application. We have just launched a new Safety Culture Review Service (SCART) that has already been requested by some Member States.

We are now developing a new safety guide on "Establishing a National Nuclear Installations Safety Infrastructure" addressing the needs of new NPP countries.

We are also working to initiate a self-sustaining global network of nuclear safety knowledge and experience as the supporting technical infrastructure for safety improvement worldwide, based on the existing thematic and regional knowledge networks.

I am convinced that all these activities and programmes, as well as the more direct secretariat services provided to this Review Meeting, will contribute to the fulfilment of the major objectives of the Convention and support continuous improvement of its implementation process.

Before closing, please allow me - as the Secretary for this Review Meeting - to address briefly some issues with regard to the working methods of the Conventions' Peer Review Process:

1. The introduction of the secured CNS Website for posting questions and responding to them proved - again - to be very effective and efficient tool for the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat.
This web based platform performed very well without major problems.
The website has been improved by the Secretariat according to your feedback of experience.
2. The National Reports of some countries refer to the IAEA Safety Standards.
I welcome this development as a good practice. In that regard I would like to draw your attention to the "Synopsis Paper" prepared by the Secretariat responding to a request by the Contracting Parties to use the IAEA Safety Standards in preparing the National Reports. The IAEA is strongly interested in the views of the Contracting Parties, in this regard.
3. Some national reports were submitted well beyond the deadline, and 5 Contracting Parties did not submit a national report at all. Indication of contact points and some questions were submitted very late in some cases.
4. Cooperation arrangements at bilateral and regional levels for helping the preparation of National Reports for new CPs may facilitate the accession.

Finally, I would like to assure you of the Secretariat's commitment to serve you, the Contracting Parties of the Convention on Nuclear Safety in your review process. I believe that, as nuclear power programmes become more globalized and revitalized, the more relevant and valuable the Convention on Nuclear Safety will become.

As you have moved into your second decade, we stand ready to work with you in your efforts to make this Convention as viable and as valuable as it can be.

I sincerely wish that your stay in Vienna be productive and enjoyable!