

IAEA TM on the Establishment of radioactive waste organization

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It has been an honour for France to host this Technical Meeting held, with the support of the IAEA, as recommended by the third review meeting of the Joint Convention.

This meeting was organized with a view to ensuring continuity between the third and the fourth Review Meetings of the Joint Convention. Because the establishment of a Radioactive Waste Management Organisation was one topic of most interest among contracting parties during the last Review meeting, it has been decided to devote this meeting to this topic.

The long-term management of radioactive waste is of particular importance for the protection of future generations.

The responsibility of the State is to set up an adequate framework to ensure the consistency of the radioactive waste management policy and define management solutions for all radioactive waste categories, to create a radioactive waste management organization with suitable means and resources, to implement R&D programmes and to inform adequately the public.

In France, for instance, a national plan for the management of radioactive materials and waste (PNGMDR) has been implemented and proved to be an efficient tool, covering all issues related to radioactive waste management and defining disposal solutions for each category of radioactive waste. This national plan has just been updated: the new version was made public last Friday (4th June) jointly by the French Nuclear Safety Authority, ASN and the Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea.

The creation of an organization in charge of the centralized management of radioactive waste ensures that competences and knowledge in this field are gathered with a view to optimizing the use of resources, allowing a better coordination and the consistency of radioactive waste management.

Providing to the public a transparent information, is a key element to ensure that citizens have a good understanding of radioactive waste management activities carried out by national Authorities.

As a conclusion, this meeting, organized in continuity with discussions started at the last review meeting, gave you the opportunity to examine all issues regarding the creation and the functioning of national radioactive waste management organisations.

These intense and comprehensive exchanges focused on experience sharing and lessons learnt involved countries with different experiences, in particular countries which are not Joint Convention contracting parties.

This technical meeting is also a good example of the initiatives that could be launched in order to enhance international cooperation and to ensure continuity between two Joint Convention review meetings. France encourages these international initiatives and I hope that this technical meeting will be the first of a series.

On behalf of the three French bodies in charge of the organization on this meeting, namely the Ministry of Ecology, Energy, Sustainable Development and the Sea, the French national Agency for radioactive waste management, ANDRA and the French Nuclear Safety Authority, ASN, I would like to thank you for your participation.