

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (Joint Convention)

Third Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

16–17 May 2017, Vienna, Austria

SUMMARY REPORT

1. The Third Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention was held at IAEA's Headquarters from 16 to 17 May 2017.
2. Fifty-seven Contracting Parties participated in the Extraordinary Meeting, namely: Albania, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea (Republic of), Latvia, Lesotho, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Montenegro, Morocco, Norway, Oman, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States of America, Viet Nam and EURATOM.
3. The Meeting was opened by Mr Andrew Orrell, Acting Director of the Division of Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety, Department of Nuclear Safety and Security of the IAEA, who welcomed all Contracting Parties. He recalled the three objectives of the Joint Convention, as stated in Article 1 of the Joint Convention. Mr Orrell also noted that the Meeting was a further effort by the Contracting Parties to improve the implementation of the nuclear safety conventions adopted under the auspices of the IAEA, and that the Secretariat of the Joint Convention welcomed this overall effort made by Contracting Parties.
4. Mr Orrell noted that, at the Fifth Review Meeting, Contracting Parties had decided by consensus to hold an Extraordinary Meeting prior to the Organizational Meeting for the Sixth Review Meeting. He also highlighted a number of proposals to be discussed during this Extraordinary Meeting.
5. Pursuant to Rule 42.4 of the *Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules* (INFCIRC/602/Rev.5): "*The President of the most recent Review Meeting shall act as President of the Extraordinary Meeting.*" Accordingly, Mr David Huizenga acted as the President of this Extraordinary Meeting.
6. In his opening remarks, Mr Huizenga provided a short historical outline of the Joint Convention. He recognized that, during the last five review cycles, progress has been made, while spent fuel and radioactive waste continue to be accumulated around the world. Mr Huizenga introduced the new Joint Convention Coordinator, Ms Sandra Geupel, and welcomed five new Contracting Parties since the Fifth Review Meeting in May 2015 (Botswana, Jordan, Lesotho, Niger and Peru) as well as one late ratifier (Madagascar) who will become a Contracting Party in June 2017. This will bring the total number of Contracting Parties to 75.

7. Furthermore, Mr Huizenga mentioned the last Regional Promotional Meeting, which was organized in October 2015 with the assistance of South Africa, and which resulted in an increased number of countries interested to become Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention.
8. The provisional agenda for the Meeting, JC/EM3/01, had been distributed to the Contracting Parties and was adopted (see Annex 1).
9. The Meeting examined the credentials of delegates and accepted the credentials thus far submitted and, in accordance with the established practice, allowed the delegates for whom proper credentials had not yet been received to participate in the work of the Meeting on the understanding that they would submit credentials in due form as soon as possible, preferably before the end of the Meeting.
10. The President informed the Contracting Parties that, according to the Secretariat's records, there was one late ratifier who did not attend, and that there was no request from Intergovernmental Organizations to attend this Extraordinary Meeting as observers.
11. The Adviser to the President (hereinafter designated as CNS Adviser) of the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention of Nuclear Safety (hereinafter referred to as CNS), on behalf of one of the Vice-Presidents, gave a presentation on the special session on "Challenges faced by non-nuclear power countries and embarking countries participating in the CNS review process" (held at the Seventh CNS Review Meeting).
12. The Contracting Parties received a presentation on the outcome of the First Meeting to Discuss Feedback from Contracting Parties to Improve the Review Process for the Joint Convention (Consultancy Meeting), held in October 2016 upon request by the Contracting Parties at their Fifth Review Meeting. The Chairman of the Consultancy Meeting, Mr Sigurður Magnusson (Iceland), summarized the outcome of this Meeting.
13. From the Consultancy Meeting, three proposals were highlighted and further discussed by the Contracting Parties at this Extraordinary Meeting.
 - (a) Promotional Activities: Contracting Parties discussed the proposal on exploring the feasibility of providing financial support to new Contracting Parties attending their first Review Meeting. No decision was made in this regard. This issue may be further discussed in the Open-Ended Working Group (OEWG) for the Sixth Review Meeting of the Joint Convention.
 - (b) Review Process – National Reports: Contracting Parties discussed a proposal to establish a Working Group to review and propose as appropriate the revision of the Joint Convention guidance documents, in particular to accommodate specific reporting needs of Contracting Parties without a nuclear power programme, including potential development of templates. Contracting Parties agreed to further discuss this issue during the OEWG at the Sixth Review Meeting. Several Contracting Parties expressed an interest in working together to develop proposals for consideration in the OEWG.
 - (c) Review Process – Review Meetings: Contracting Parties discussed the proposal to have, on one day during the Closing Plenary Session of the Sixth Review Meeting, two parallel Topical Sessions: one on spent fuel and high level waste, while the other focussing on the management of disused sealed radioactive sources. The Contracting Parties expressed a preference to not hold parallel sessions. Contracting Parties noted that a decision on this matter, including the topic(s) to be chosen, will be made during the Organizational Meeting for the Sixth Review Meeting, to be held subsequent to this Extraordinary Meeting.

14. There were eight additional proposals from the Consultancy Meeting that were consolidated and summarized by the President as follows:

- Promotional activities should be twin-pronged to target both the political and technical/regulatory/legal institutions within a Member State. This proposal is already being implemented by the Secretariat in ongoing efforts to encourage adherence.
- Contracting Parties explore ways to invite certain Member States (Non-Contracting Parties), particularly those with or considering developing nuclear power plants, to observe parts of the Closing Plenary Session of the Sixth Review Meeting. Contracting Parties already have the authority to do this.
- Utilize the existing Joint Convention Newsletter as an additional tool to further promote and elevate the Joint Convention. The Contracting Parties supported continuing the Newsletter, especially as a tool for promotional activities.
- The Secretariat of the Joint Convention should engage Regional Networks, in particular those being part of the IAEA Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN), to assist new Contracting Parties in their participation in the Joint Convention review process. There was no objection to using existing authority to implement this proposal.
- The President of the Joint Convention Review Meeting sends letters to the national contact points to remind them of their obligations under the Joint Convention. The Contracting Parties recommended that the President of the Sixth Review Meeting continues this practice.

15. At the Fifth Review Meeting of the Joint Convention, the Contracting Parties requested to consider the process regarding openness and transparency adopted by the CNS Contracting Parties. As a follow-up, the CNS Adviser made a presentation on the experience regarding openness and transparency at the Seventh CNS Review Meeting.

In this regard, the following was agreed by the Contracting Parties:

- (a) The *Guidelines regarding the Review Process* (INFCIRC/603/Rev.6) will be amended to make publicly available each National Report, 90 days after the Review Meeting, unless the Contracting Party notifies the Secretariat otherwise (see Annex 2).
- (b) The President can permit web-streaming of the Opening Plenary Session and the part of the Closing Plenary Session at which the final version of the Summary Report is adopted.
- (c) The President can request the Secretariat to invite journalists to the Opening Plenary Session and the part of the Closing Plenary Session at which the final version of the Summary Report is adopted.

16. The Contracting Parties further discussed a number of additional proposals submitted by Contracting Parties in advance of this Extraordinary Meeting.

17. France presented the proposal JC/EM3/P01, suggesting to re-assign the discussions identifying overarching issues during Country Group sessions to General Committee meetings held during the Review Meeting. There was general agreement that the discussion should continue to take place in the Country Group sessions but should be done in a more efficient manner. One suggestion was to reserve a time period on the last day of the Country Group Session to compile a list of potential overarching issues. It was also noted that the Country Group Chairpersons and the President would play an important role in consolidating and presenting the list of overarching issues to the Closing Plenary Session.

18. Australia presented a proposal merging two initial different proposals on Good Practices, JC/EM3/P02 (United States of America/US) and JC/EM3/P07 (Australia). In this context, the Joint Convention Contracting Parties recognized that the CNS Contracting Parties dealt with this issue without any changes to their Guidelines, specifically by ensuring that a strict and consistent interpretation of the term “Good Practice” was applied across all Country Groups. The CNS Contracting Parties also recognized other achievements as “Areas of Good Performance”. It was agreed that a similar approach should be followed at the Sixth Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention.

19. The US introduced two proposals JC/EM3/P05 and JC/EM3/P06 regarding the time management at the Joint Convention Review Meetings. This was followed by a presentation of the Secretariat, providing suggestions on the number of Country Groups for the Sixth Review Meeting. The Contracting Parties discussed various options and provided feedback to the Secretariat, to support the decision-making on a timetable for Country Group sessions at the Sixth Review Meeting. There was consensus for increasing the number of Country Groups from 7 to 8, without changes in time allocation for the discussion of the National Presentations.

20. The Contracting Parties received a presentation on the outcomes of the Joint Convention Topical Meeting related to the disposal of spent fuel or radioactive waste in another country than the one where they were generated, which was held in September 2016 in Vienna. This was followed by a discussion of two proposals by the US, JC/EM3/P03 and JC/EM3/P04, on transboundary movement and multinational disposal. Contracting Parties recognized that the Joint Convention Guidelines already addressed how Contracting Parties meet their obligations under Article 27 of the Joint Convention, and decided that potential changes to the existing guidelines could be discussed in future OEWGs.

21. As provided for in Article 34 of the Joint Convention, the Summary Report was prepared and agreed upon, to be published at the end of the Extraordinary Meeting. The draft Summary Report was examined paragraph by paragraph on 17 May 2017 and amended as necessary. The final version was approved by the Contracting Parties by consensus.

22. The final Summary Report of the Third Extraordinary Meeting was issued as JC/EM3/07/Final.

List of Annexes

1. Agenda of the Meeting
2. INFCIRC/603/Rev.7, Guidelines regarding the Review Process, as agreed at the Meeting

Annex 1

INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (Joint Convention)

Third Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties

16–17 May 2017, Vienna, Austria

Board Room B/M1, M Building, Vienna International Centre

AGENDA

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda
3. Credentials of delegates
4. How to improve the Review Process for the Joint Convention
 - 4.1. Presentation on the special session on challenges faced by non-nuclear power countries and embarking countries participating in the CNS review process, held at the Seventh Review Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS)
 - 4.2. Outcome of the First Meeting to Discuss Feedback from Contracting Parties to Improve the Review Process for the Joint Convention
 - a. Background information and basis
 - b. Discussions and proposals
 - i. Promotional Activities
 - ii. Review Process — National Reports
 - iii. Review Process — Review Meetings
5. Presentation and discussion on the process regarding openness and transparency adopted by the Contracting Parties to the CNS
6. Consideration of any other proposals made by Contracting Parties
 - 6.1. Overarching issues

JC/EM3/P01 Overarching issues to be highlighted by the General Committee (France)
 - 6.2. Good Practices

Background information: CNS approach on the issue of ‘Good Practices’

JC/EM3/P02 Definition of Good Practice (USA)

JC/EM3/P07 Addressing the issue of 'Good Practices' for the Review Process (Australia)

6.3. Time management at the Joint Convention Review Meetings

JC/EM3/P05 Recommendation to improve time management (USA)

JC/EM3/P06 Length of Closing Plenary Session (USA)

6.4. Transboundary movement and multinational disposal

Background information: Presentation of the outcomes of the Topical Meeting under the Joint Convention on Challenges and Responsibilities of Multinational Radioactive Waste Disposal Facilities

JC/EM3/P03 Reporting on transboundary movement of spent fuel and radioactive waste for multinational disposal (USA)

JC/EM3/P04 Ad Hoc Working Group related to transboundary movement and multinational disposal (USA)

7. Discussion and approval of the Summary Report

8. Examination of the President's Report

9. Closing of the meeting

Annex 2

Information Circular

INFCIRC/603/Rev.67 Draft 1

Date: ~~18 December 2014~~ 17 May 2017

General Distribution

Original: English

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

Guidelines regarding the Review Process

As agreed at the Third Extraordinary Meeting

1. The “Guidelines regarding the Review Process” adopted at the Preparatory Meeting of the Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention held from 10 to 12 December 2001 were modified at the First Review Meeting of Contracting Parties held from 3 to 14 November 2003, the Extraordinary Meeting of Contracting Parties held on 7 November 2005, the Second Review Meeting of Contracting Parties held from 15 to 24 May 2006, the Third Review Meeting of Contracting Parties held from 11 to 20 May 2009, the Fourth Review Meeting of Contracting Parties held from 14 to 23 May 2012, ~~and~~ the Second Extraordinary Meeting held from 12 to 13 May 2014, and the Third Extraordinary Meeting held from 16 to 17 May 2017.
2. The modified “Guidelines regarding the Review Process” are set forth in the Attachment hereto.

Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

Guidelines regarding the Review Process

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- V. Assignment of Contracting Parties to Country Groups
- VI. The Country Group Review Process
- VII. Duties of a Contracting Party as a Member of a Country Group
- VIII. Guidance to Officers on how to Conduct a Country Group Session
- IX. Distribution of National Reports and Subsequent Actions
- X. Summary Report

ANNEX 1

Duties and Qualifications of Officers for a Review Meeting of the Joint Convention

- I. Background
- II. Duties of Officers
- III. Qualifications of Officers

ANNEX 2

Common Understanding of the Terms “Good Practice”, “Suggestion”, and “Challenge”

- I. Good Practice
- II. Suggestion
- III. Challenge

I. Introduction

1. These guidelines, established by the Contracting Parties under Article 29 of the Convention, are intended to be read in conjunction with the text of the Convention for the purpose of providing guidance to Contracting Parties on the process for reviewing National Reports submitted under Article 32, in order to facilitate the efficient review of Contracting Parties' implementation of their obligations under the Convention.
2. The aim of the review process is to examine National Reports thoroughly, so that Contracting Parties can learn from each other's solutions to common and individual safety problems concerning spent fuel management and radioactive waste management and, above all, contribute to achieving and maintaining a high level of safety worldwide through a constructive exchange of views. The success of the review process is dependent on the commitment of each and every Contracting Party (1) to take a critical look at its national program and report issues and potential issues in a frank and candid manner, and (2) to ask each other difficult and sometimes challenging questions. A time chart of the steps leading up to a Review Meeting is given in Table 1.

II. Background

3. Recognizing that reviews of National Reports at periodic meetings under Article 30 of the Convention could be accomplished more efficiently through the establishment of subgroups, the Contracting Parties have decided to establish Country Groups for each Review Meeting. Each group will consider in detail the National Report of each member of that group, discussing all the subject areas covered by the reports.
4. An Organizational Meeting held prior to a Review Meeting may decide to organize topic sessions at the Review Meeting to address more specifically particular subjects that may not be adequately considered within the Country Group arrangements.

III. Organizational Meeting and Nomination of Officers

5. Not later than twelve months before each Review Meeting, an Organizational Meeting will be held to allocate Contracting Parties to Country Groups (see section V), and to elect the Review Meeting President and Vice-Presidents, and group Co-ordinators, Rapporteurs, Chairpersons, and Vice-Chairpersons.
6. In advance of the Organizational Meeting, the Secretariat shall circulate to the Contracting Parties a background information brochure containing guidance such as introducing the Joint Convention and its associated Rules of procedure and guidelines.

III.1. Nomination of the President and Vice-President

7. Not later than three months before the Organizational Meeting, the Secretariat will request Contracting Parties to submit in writing the name of any individual that the Contracting Party is nominating for election to the position of President or Vice-President. Not later than two months before the Organizational Meeting, as part of such nomination, a Contracting Party shall provide, in

writing, relevant biographical information on the candidate, the qualifications of the candidate, the issues that should be addressed by the Contracting Parties during the next three years and the position of the candidate on those issues. The Secretariat will circulate the names of candidates for the position of President or Vice Presidents and materials supporting their candidacy to all Contracting Parties at least one month before the Organizational Meeting.

8. Contracting Parties will endeavour to reach consensus on the President and Vice Presidents from the candidates nominated in accordance with Paragraph 7.

9. Each candidate for the elective places, or their representative, shall have the opportunity to make a short oral presentation to the Contracting Parties at the Organizational Meeting that addresses the items in the material supporting their candidacy and shall answer questions from the Contracting Parties.

III.2. Nomination of Other Officers

10. Not later than three months before the Organizational Meeting, the Secretariat will request Contracting Parties to submit in writing the name of any individual that the Contracting Party is nominating for election to the position of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Rapporteur, or Co-ordinator. Not later than one month before the Organizational Meeting, a Contracting Party should submit in writing the name of any individual that the Contracting Party is nominating for election to the position of Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Rapporteur, or Co-ordinator. The Secretariat will circulate the names of candidates to all Contracting Parties before the Organizational Meeting.

III.3. Additional Considerations

11. Contracting Parties are encouraged to nominate candidates for the above elective places and to indicate the extent to which the candidates are willing to be considered for other elective places in the event that they are not elected to their first choice.

12. Annex 1 contains a list of desirable qualifications and experience of the above-mentioned officers, and a summary of their duties. Contracting Parties are encouraged to take that information into account when considering nominations as well as other factors such as geographic distribution.

13. Following the Organizational Meeting, a workshop of incoming and outgoing officers shall be held to describe the Review Meeting process in detail, including key documents, and to share experience and lessons learned. The National Contacts, as described in Annex 1, shall be invited to participate, if they consider it appropriate, in this meeting.

IV. Structure of Review Meeting

14. Review Meetings are expected to have a duration of two weeks. During the meeting, Contracting Parties will meet in pre-assigned Country Groups in order to review National Reports in detail. In addition to these Country Group sessions, there will be plenary sessions, and depending on the need, other meetings of various types.

IV.1. Opening Plenary Session

15. At a short opening session in plenary, procedural matters will be addressed. National statements, if any, will be accepted in writing only.

IV.2. Closing Plenary Session

16. (a) One day prior to the closing plenary session of the Review Meeting, the Rapporteur for each Country Group will make available to all Contracting Parties a written report that takes account of the views expressed in the discussion on each National Report in that group, includes Good Practices, Suggestions, Challenges and points of agreement and disagreement, and summarizes the overarching common issues identified by that Country Group;

(b) In the closing plenary session of the Review Meeting:

- i. for each Country Group in turn, the relevant group Rapporteur will make a brief and concise oral report that summarizes the overarching common issues identified by the group and draws out these issues for discussion in the plenary session;
- ii. each Contracting Party will have an opportunity to respond to the questions raised and/or comments made on its National Report;
- iii. there will be an opportunity for all Contracting Parties to comment on any National Report and on the Rapporteurs' written and oral reports;
- iv. there will be a thorough and candid discussion of the overarching common issues identified in the Rapporteurs' reports; this should be followed by a discussion of the status of world-wide safety of spent fuel management and world-wide safety of radioactive waste management;
- v. suggestions concerning changes to any of the Convention's documents or procedures will be discussed;
- vi. the date for the following Review Meeting, and the related schedule of deadlines, will be discussed and agreed;
- vii. the meeting summary report will be discussed and approved by consensus of the Contracting Parties; and
- viii. the President's report will be tabled.

17. Contracting Parties should note that the closing plenary session has an uncertain duration. It can continue well past the normal time at which meetings end, due to the need for consensus on the meeting summary report. Delegates are therefore advised to avoid travel commitments on the final day of a Review Meeting.

IV.3. Intermediate Plenary Sessions

18. Plenary sessions may be held at the call of the President at any time during a Review Meeting.

IV.4. Country Group Sessions

19. These sessions will be conducted in the manner described in Sections VI and VII.

IV.5. Open-ended Group Sessions

20. Contracting Parties in plenary session can decide to create one or more open-ended groups to meet during a Review Meeting. As the name suggests, any Contracting Party can attend any meeting of an open-ended group. The tasks assigned to the group should be documented. The purpose of such groups is to allow discussion and resolution of procedural and other issues relevant to the functioning of the Convention prior to their consideration by a plenary session. Open-ended group sessions should be scheduled so as to not conflict with plenary sessions and Country Group sessions.

V. Assignment of Contracting Parties to Country Groups

21. At the Joint Convention's Preparatory Meeting held on 10-14 December 2001 in accordance with Article 29 of the Convention, the mechanism was set out for establishing Country Groups for Review Meetings. It was decided that:

- (a) The membership of Country Groups should not be such as to represent particular geographical areas;
- (b) the number of groups for a particular Review Meeting will be decided at the corresponding Organizational Meeting, taking into account the number of Contracting Parties;
- (c) in order to achieve sufficient breadth of experience to promote both effective and efficient discussion, each group should contain approximately equal numbers of Contracting Parties with experience of the management of spent fuel and radioactive waste associated with nuclear power plants;
- (d) the means adopted for ensuring this is to rank Contracting Parties by the number of their nuclear power reactors that have achieved criticality, including those that are being decommissioned and those that have completed decommissioning in accordance with the definition in the Convention, and within that, alphabetically in English. These Contracting Parties are then distributed among the Country Groups, with the Contracting Party having the most power reactors in the first group, the Contracting Party having the next highest number of power reactors in the second group, and so on. When all the groups have been allocated a Contracting Party with nuclear power reactors, the distribution process starts again but in the reverse sequence of Country Groups, continuing to work through all the Contracting Parties with nuclear power reactors in descending order of the number of their power reactors;
- (e) the distribution between the Country Groups of the Contracting Parties without nuclear power reactors should be made on an alphabetical basis, continuing the process from where it stopped for the Contracting Parties referred to in paragraph 21 (d). This should start with a randomly selected letter and then the use of the first letter of each Contracting Party's country name, spelt in English.

22. States or regional organizations of an integration or other nature which ratify the Convention after an Organizational Meeting but at least 90 days before the associated Review Meeting are obliged to join in the review process with other Contracting Parties. Such Contracting Parties should be added to existing Country Groups in sequential order of date of ratification, continuing the process from where it stopped under para. 21 (e).

23. Under the terms of Article 40(2), States or regional organizations of an integration or other nature which ratify later than 90 days before the date fixed for a Review Meeting (late ratifiers) will not become Contracting Parties until after that Review Meeting has begun. However they may, upon a consensus decision of the Contracting Parties, participate at the Review Meeting. To facilitate such participation, the President of the Review Meeting shall circulate to all Contracting Parties the proposal for the late ratifier to participate and seek their views thereon. If no Contracting Party objects, the late ratifier may be granted full participation rights in the Review Meeting. National Reports produced by late ratifiers will be distributed as soon as possible by the Secretariat to all Contracting Parties. Such Contracting Parties should be added to existing Country Groups in sequential order of date of ratification, continuing the process from where it stopped under para. 21 (e).

24. Table 2 shows an example of such an allocation to Country Groups if there were five groups.

VI. The Country Group Review Process

25. As provided for in Article 30(3) of the Convention, each Contracting Party shall have a reasonable opportunity to discuss the National Reports of any other Contracting Party. In the period up to three months before each Review Meeting, all Contracting Parties may submit questions and/or comments on individual National Reports. These questions and/or comments and the responses to them should be distributed to all Contracting Parties (see Section IX).

26. In order to facilitate the review process, Contracting Parties attending a Review Meeting are assigned to Country Groups (see Section V). The purpose of the Country Group sessions is to review together the National Reports submitted by the Contracting Parties that are members of the Country Group. In order to attain the objectives of the Convention, this review should be thorough and conducted by the Country Group members in a constructive manner and should promote robust and candid discussions in order to identify Good Practices, Suggestions, Challenges and other issues that are important to improving the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management.

27. Country group sessions should be scheduled so as to not conflict with plenary sessions.

28. While any Contracting Party may attend any Country Group session, Contracting Parties are encouraged to provide the Secretariat at the latest two weeks before each Review Meeting with a list of which Country Group sessions they intend to attend, in order to allow the Secretariat to make the appropriate meeting space and logistical arrangements. A Contracting Party is expected to participate in all reviews carried out by the Country Group of which it is a member.

29. Contracting Parties should provide a leading role for their regulatory bodies in their delegations attending Country Group sessions.

30. Each Country Group shall allow an appropriate amount of time, not exceeding one full day, for the discussion of each National Report. Reviews of shorter National Reports can be scheduled for half a day, except when interpretation is used in the Country Group session, in which case additional time should be allocated. The total time available for group sessions will have been decided at the Organizational Meeting.

31. The review session in each Country Group should start with a short presentation from the particular Contracting Party whose report is to be reviewed. This Contracting Party should then discuss the substantive written questions previously sent to the group Co-ordinator and to the Contracting Party concerned. There should then be a discussion period on the report and on all the

questions that have been submitted. A major objective of the review session should be to identify any Good Practices, Suggestions, Challenges or other issues that may be an overarching common issue that should be highlighted as important to improving safety. At the end of a session, the Country Group Rapporteur should present a summary report on the session to the participants. The Rapporteur should then prepare the report of the session, and obtain the agreement of the group members on the report.

32. The Rapporteurs' daily reports should be provided to the Review Meeting President and to the Secretariat within half a day of the end of the relevant Country Group session to facilitate preparation of the overall Review Meeting summary report.

33. This process should be repeated for each National Report.

34. The Country Group members should discuss and agree on the content of the written and oral reports to be presented to the Contracting Parties by the Country Group's Rapporteur.

35. The Secretariat will store the Rapporteurs' daily reports confidentially. During the meeting of officers immediately preceding the start of the next Review Meeting, a copy of the report for each Contracting Party will be given to all officers of the Country Group.

VII. Duties of a Contracting Party as a Member of a Country Group

36. Article 33 of the Joint Convention requires Contracting Parties to attend meetings of the Parties. Attendance at Review Meetings is therefore obligatory. The purpose of Review Meetings is to review National Reports. This review is carried out in Country Groups. It therefore follows that an important obligation on each Contracting Party is to participate fully in its Country Group.

37. Each Contracting Party thus has two sets of duties, one being to undergo a review by Contracting Parties, and the other being to review the reports of other members of the Country Group to which it has been assigned.

38. As a member of a Country Group, a Contracting Party should:

- (a) study in detail the National Reports of all other members of its group;
- (b) inform other Contracting Parties in the Country Group, both directly through the identified contact points, and through the relevant group Co-ordinator, of any questions and comments arising from its review of the National Reports; and
- (c) during Country Group sessions, participate in an in-depth discussion of the National Report of each member of the group.

39. In relation to undergoing a review by other Contracting Parties, a Contracting Party should:
- (a) prepare a detailed report as required by Article 32 of the Convention;
 - (b) provide answers to the written questions and comments of other Contracting Parties on its National Report;
 - (c) endeavour to issue, at the latest one month before the start of the Review Meeting, a compilation of the questions, comments and associated answers on its National Report to all other Contracting Parties, the group Co-ordinator, the group Rapporteur and the Secretariat;
 - (d) present to its Country Group during the Review Meeting a report based on its National Report and the ensuing questions and comments;
 - (e) provide a copy of the presentation to the Country Group Chair by noon the day before the presentation is scheduled, so that it may be distributed to the Country Group officers and Country Group members before the close of business; and
 - (f) arrive in the Country Group meeting room 15 minutes before the presentation to review logistics with the Country Group Chair.

VIII. Guidance to Officers on how to Conduct a Country Group Session

40. The objective of the sessions of a Country Group during a Review Meeting of the Joint Convention is to review the National Reports submitted by the Contracting Parties that are members of the Country Group. As stated in para. 26, this review should be comprehensive, constructive, and open. The officers for each Country Group play a crucial role in determining how well the Country Group achieves this objective.

41. The officers of a Country Group are the Chairperson, the Vice-Chairperson, the Co-ordinator, and the Rapporteur. These will all have been elected at the Organizational meeting held before the Review Meeting.

42. During the interim period between the Organizational Meeting and the Review Meeting, the National Reports will have been distributed, and written questions, comments, and responses generated. The Co-ordinator receives National Reports, questions, comments and answers for his/her Country Group, and will produce an analysis of the material and identify any trends before the start of the Review Meeting. A copy of the analysis will be sent, confidentially, to the other officers and all Contracting Parties who are members of the Country Group. Following the adjournment of the Review Meeting, the Secretariat will upload all of these co-ordinators' analyses for each country review group on the Joint Convention secure website (<http://jc.iaea.org>).

43. Each Country Group officer should become familiar with the National Reports from Contracting Parties that are members of the Country Group, and the Co-ordinator's analysis, before arriving for the Review Meeting.

44. Review Meeting officers should convene, together with the Secretariat staff members who will be participating in the Review Meeting, for two days immediately preceding the start of the Review Meeting. On the first of these two days, agreement should be reached on subjects such as the structure and content of the daily Rapporteurs' reports, the timing of sessions, how the General Committee will

interact with Country Groups, the format of Rapporteurs' reports to the closing plenary session, etc. The second day should be devoted to separate meetings of each set of Country Group officers, together with the Secretariat member who will be assisting the group. During these meetings, each group of officers should discuss the Co-ordinator's analysis in some detail, since this analysis identifies and summarizes the questions and comments on each Convention article, and the main issues emerging from those. The officers will also receive copies of the Rapporteurs' reports from the previous Review Meeting, for the Contracting Parties that are in the Country Group. These reports should be studied for any item on which follow-up was recommended. The officers should also discuss their intended method of operation during the Review Meeting.

45. In preparing for a Country Group session, the Chairperson of the country group should prepare an abbreviated version of the Co-ordinator's report, listing individual points under each of the reporting headings. Prior to the start of the Country Group session, the group's officers should each have a copy of this abbreviated listing.

46. During the presentation and subsequent discussion in the Country Group, the officers should use the abbreviated listing as a checklist for items to be discussed. If any item has not been mentioned, the Chairperson should make a point of raising it before closing the session. If necessary, the Chairperson should proactively encourage each member of the Country Group to participate in the discussion, especially of difficult items. By following this systematic approach, the Chairperson can ensure that the Country Group deals comprehensively with each National Report and presentation, and by using teamwork, the workload involved can be distributed in a reasonable way between the officers of the Country Group.

47. The essence of the recommended approach is:

- (a) thorough preparation by the Chairperson, so that the Chairperson is familiar with the issues that are likely to be relevant, in advance of the Country Group session. The Co-ordinator's report is the obvious starting point for the detailed preparation;
- (b) that all officers of the Country Group should also be familiar with the issues so that they can be effective team members during the Country Group sessions;
- (c) that officers should remember that they have a duty to encourage a full discussion and optimum dialogue after each national presentation;
- (d) that the Chairperson should manage the time available for considering each National Report to ensure the Country Group optimizes the time for discussion within the allowed time period for the session and to promote a robust and candid discussion in order to identify Good Practices, Suggestions, Challenges and other issues that are important to improving the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. The available time for the review session should be one-third for the presentation, one-third for the discussion period, and one-third for the preparation of and agreement on the Rapporteur's Daily Report on the session; and
- (e) that officers should be available to assist the Rapporteurs, as needed, in the preparation of the daily report from each Country Group, and the Rapporteurs written and oral reports to plenary. In order to achieve this, the Chairperson should be alert to the possible need to allow the Rapporteur to leave the session temporarily to write up a particularly complex or controversial part of the report while it is still fresh in the Rapporteur's mind. In such instances, it is suggested that the Vice-Chairperson temporarily assumes the role of the Rapporteur.

IX. Distribution of National Reports and Subsequent Actions

48. At the latest seven months before each Review Meeting, each Contracting Party should submit its National Report under Article 32 of the Convention to the Secretariat of the Review Meeting, for circulation to all Contracting Parties and to the observers invited under Article 33(2) of the Convention. The National Report should be submitted (a) electronically, to the secure web site, as a single PDF format file. The file size, including all graphics, charts, slides, etc. incorporated into the report, should not exceed 5 Megabytes; and (b) as one hard copy, to the Secretariat, as a single bound document comprising the main body as well as all annexes. States or regional organizations of an integration or other nature which ratify the Convention after an Organizational Meeting but at least 90 days before the associated Review Meeting are required to submit as soon as possible, and in any event not later than 90 days before the Review Meeting, a National Report under Article 32 of the Convention and are entitled to receive the other National Reports.

49. Each Contracting Party should then review the National Reports of Contracting Parties in their Country Group in detail, and the National Reports of other Contracting Parties to the extent desired. Questions and comments on a National Report of a Contracting Party should be sent to the contact point for that Contracting Party. These questions and comments shall be posted by the Contracting Party at least three months before each Review Meeting on a secure and restricted database on the internet provided and operated by the Secretariat. The secure and restricted database is the means by which these questions and comments are distributed to all Contracting Parties. Written answers to the questions and comments should be provided not later than one month before a Review Meeting. Contracting Parties should endeavour to issue a compilation of the questions and comments on their National Reports and of the respective answers to all other Contracting Parties, the group Co-ordinator, the group Rapporteur and the Secretariat one month prior to the Review Meeting. In this way each Contracting Party will be aware of all the issues raised and the associated responses on each National Report before the Review Meeting.

50. Contracting Parties are encouraged to use electronic means, for submission and distribution of National Reports, questions, comments, and answers, but use of traditional methods is also acceptable. Contracting Parties may elect to use batch uploading when appropriate. The Contracting Party's contact point is responsible for quality assurance that the uploaded questions and responses are correct, and that the responses successfully respond to the individual questions or comments raised by the National Report reviewers having submitted the questions and comments.

51. If a Contracting Party submits questions and comments late in the process (in light of the dates agreed for such submissions), those questions and comments should not be entertained unless the recipient Contracting Party and relevant Country Group Chairperson agree.

51.52. The Secretariat will make publicly available each National Report, as uploaded to the secure and restricted database, within 90 days after the Review Meeting unless the Contracting Party concerned notifies the Secretariat otherwise.

X. Summary Report

~~52.~~53. As provided for in Article 34 of the Convention, a summary report is required to be published at the end of each Review Meeting. The President should prepare this and submit it to the closing plenary session for adoption by consensus by the Contracting Parties. The summary report is for public distribution and should be concise and clear. It should summarize major issues, possibly by combining significant points made in the Rapporteurs' reports that summarized the Country Group discussions. It should not identify any particular Contracting Party by name except as specified below, but should highlight the overarching common issues identified by the Contracting Parties. It should also make recommendations as appropriate for the future. The summary report will identify any Contracting Parties that did not submit National Reports or attend the Review Meeting. The President should also prepare a "President's Report". This should summarize the main findings of the meeting and contain other information useful to the Secretariat such as appropriate logistical comments or suggestions, details of any modifications to supporting documents approved by the Review Meeting, and other similar material. This report should be presented to the Contracting Parties for consideration, but is not intended to be a public document.

Table 1: Time Chart *

Organizational Meeting	Deadline for Submission of National Reports	Deadline for Submission of Questions and Comments	Deadline for Submission of Answers, and of optional Compilation of Questions and Answers	Deadline for Notification of Participation in Country Groups	Officers' Meeting	Start of Review Meeting
- 12 months	- 7 months	- 3 months	- 1 month	-2 weeks	-2 days	0 day
Rule 11.1. in the Rules of Procedures and Financial Rules	Rule 38 in the Rules of Procedures and Financial Rules	Paras. 25 & 49 of the Guidelines Regarding the Review Process	Paras. 39 (c) & 49 of the Guidelines Regarding the Review Process	Para 28 of the Guidelines Regarding the Review Process	Para 44 of the Guidelines Regarding the Review Process	Article 30 of the Convention

* The time shown in this chart are approximate. The exact deadlines and timing of events will be determined in accordance with the Convention, the relevant rules and guidelines as well as any relevant practice.

Table 2: An Illustrative Example of the Mechanism for Forming Country Groups

Notes:

1. This table is for illustrative purposes only. The actual allocation of Contracting Parties to Country Groups will be made at each Organizational Meeting.
2. The numbers of nuclear power reactors given in brackets are for illustrative purposes. The actual numbers of nuclear power plant reactors would be confirmed by each Contracting Party at each Organizational Meeting.
3. For this example five Country Groups have been created.
4. For this example the random letter used as the starting point for allocating Contracting Parties with no nuclear power plant reactors is "A".
5. For this example the Contracting Parties at the date of 10 November 2004 have been used.

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Group 4	Group 5
USA (136)	France (71)	Japan (56)	UK (45)	Germany (36)
Spain (10)	Sweden (12)	Ukraine (17)	Korea, Republic of (18)	Canada (25)
Belgium (7)	Slovakia (7)	Bulgaria (6)	Czech Republic (6)	Switzerland (6)
Netherlands (2)	Lithuania (2)	Argentina (2)	Hungary (4)	Finland (4)
Romania (1)	Slovenia (1)	Australia (0)	Austria (0)	Belarus (0)
Croatia (0)	Luxembourg (0)	Latvia (0)	Ireland (0)	Greece (0)
Denmark (0)	Morocco (0)	Norway (0)	Poland (0)	

ANNEX 1

Duties and Qualifications of Officers for a Review Meeting of the Joint Convention

I. Background

As a result of experience at the first Review Meeting of Contracting Parties held from 3-14 November 2003, the following guidelines were developed which reflect the duties and qualifications of officers of a Review Meeting. The list, although not exclusive, identifies the major duties and essential qualifications of these officers.

II. Duties of Officers

II.1. President

- (a) To preside over plenary sessions of the Review Meeting;
- (b) To preside over meetings of the General Committee;
- (c) To generally direct and oversee the review process, and the functioning of the Review Meeting;
- (d) To represent the Review Meeting to the media as appropriate;
- (e) To prepare a draft summary report of the Review Meeting and a President's report on the Review Meeting; and
- (f) To direct the business of the General Committee in the period after the Review Meeting until the following Organizational Meeting.

II.2. Vice-President

- (a) To act as the President of the Review Meeting, if necessary;
- (b) To participate in meetings of the General Committee;
- (c) To assist the President, as appropriate; and
- (d) To chair meetings of open-ended groups established by the plenary sessions if so decided by the Contracting Parties at the plenary session.

II.3. Country Group Chair

- (a) To chair and generally manage the meetings of a Country Group;
- (b) To promote and stimulate discussion of relevant issues in the Country Group meeting;
- (c) To study the National Reports of his/her Country Group, in advance of their presentation;
- (d) To be familiar with the main issues arising from the questions and answers on each of the National Reports to be considered in his/her Country Group;
- (e) To support the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Rapporteur's reports;
- (f) To participate in meetings of the General Committee;
- (g) To implement in his/her Country Group the decisions of the General Committee; and
- (h) To report to the General Committee on the progress in the Country Group and on any organizational issues arising in connection therewith.

II.4. Country Vice-Chair

- (a) To act as the Country Group Chair, if necessary;
- (b) To support the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Rapporteur's reports; and
- (c) To act as Rapporteur if necessary during Country Group discussion, for example to allow the Rapporteur to leave the Country Group temporarily in order to capture promptly in written form the outcome of complex discussions or in the absence, otherwise, of the Rapporteur.

II.5. Rapporteur

- (a) To be familiar with the National Reports to be presented in his/her Country Group and the Co-ordinator's analysis;
- (b) To record the essentials of the discussion of each of the National Reports in his/her Country Group sessions;
- (c) To identify topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be Good Practices, Suggestions and Challenges;
- (d) To highlight topics and issues that may be identified by the Country Group as overarching common issues.
- (e) To identify topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be areas where follow-up at a subsequent Review Meeting would be desirable;
- (f) To produce a report after each national presentation, summarizing the above items;
- (g) To revise the report after discussions in the Country Group;
- (h) To produce and present to the Contracting Parties, a written report that summarizes the discussions that took place in the Country Group during the Review Meeting and their conclusions and that summarizes the overarching common issues identified by the Country

Group and to present an oral report in the plenary that summarizes the overarching common issues and

- (i) To produce the above reports in accordance with the format, timing, and other details as directed by the General Committee.

II.6. Co-ordinator

- (a) To develop major themes and issues arising from these questions, comments, and answers that should be raised in the discussion in his/her Country Group;
- (b) To do the above in accordance with the prescribed timetables and in agreed formats, and to follow up with national contact points when they seem likely to miss deadlines; and
- (c) To provide the Country Group officers with the above analysis so that they are well informed of the issues before the start of the Review Meeting.

II.7. National Contacts

National Contacts will be nominated by each Contracting Party and will be expected:

- (a) To have access to and regularly monitor the Joint Convention's secure and restricted database ("the Convention secure website"), together with the right to upload national documents, questions, and answers;
- (b) To disseminate, nationally, information promulgated on the Convention secure web site;
- (c) To facilitate progress on issues related to the Convention in their own Member State;
- (d) To act as contact for the Country Group Co-ordinator prior to each Review Meeting; and
- (e) To consider participating in the one-day meeting of incoming and outgoing Officers of the Joint Convention.

III. Qualifications of Officers

Note

In general, it is desirable that a candidate for an officer position has experience in the Joint Convention, and especially in a previous Review Meeting of the Convention, although such experience need not have been as an officer.

III.1. President

- (a) Have experience in chairing large international meetings;
- (b) Be available for:
 - (i) the Organizational Meeting in advance of the Review Meeting,
 - (ii) the duration of the Review Meeting, and
 - (iii) occasional meetings during a period of three years after the Review Meeting;

- (c) Be knowledgeable, either first hand or by being well briefed, on the Joint Convention and its processes, and on some of the major current issues in the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management; and
- (d) Be skilled at facilitating consensus.

III.2. Vice-President

- (a) Same qualifications as in III.1 for President.

III.3. Country Group Chair

- (a) Have a demonstrated aptitude for encouraging the discussion of issues;
- (b) Have a good command of the English language;
- (c) Be a good communicator;
- (d) Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting; and
- (e) Have no vested interests, either personal or national, in countries in his/her Country Group.

III.4. Country Group Vice-Chair

- (a) Same qualifications as in item III.3 for Country Group chair.

III.5. Rapporteur

- (a) Be able to summarize in writing succinctly and rapidly;
- (b) Have a good command of the English language;
- (c) Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting;
- (d) Have no vested interests, either personal or national, in countries in his/her Country Group:
and
- (e) Have knowledge of spent fuel management and radioactive waste management issues.

III.6. Co-ordinator

- (a) Be able to extract, from a large volume of documentation, key issues that should be discussed at his/her Country Group sessions, and to advise his/her Country Group Chairperson accordingly in advance of the Review Meeting;
- (b) Be available for extensive work periods for some months before the Review Meeting;
- (c) Have knowledge of spent fuel management and radioactive waste management issues;
- (d) Be familiar with electronic database manipulation; and
- (e) Have access and ability to download and upload files on the Internet.

III.7. National Contacts

It is desirable that National Contacts possess the following qualities:

- (a) Be available for contact and work between the Review Meetings;
- (b) Have a knowledge of spent fuel and radioactive waste safety issues;
- (c) Be familiar with electronic database management; and
- (d) Have good English-language skills.

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ANNEX 2

Common Understanding of the Terms “Good Practice”, “Suggestion”, and “Challenge”

I. Good Practice

A Good Practice is a new or revised practice, policy or program that makes a significant contribution to the safety of radioactive waste and spent fuel management. A Good Practice is one that has been tried and proven by at least one Contracting Party but has not been widely implemented by other Contracting Parties; and is applicable to other Contracting Parties with similar programs.

II. Suggestion

A Suggestion is an area for improvement. It is an action needed to improve the implementation of the obligations of the Convention.

III. Challenge

A Challenge is a difficult issue for the Contracting Party. It may be a demanding undertaking (beyond day-to-day activities); or a weakness that needs to be remediated.