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FOURTH MEETING OF THE REPRESENTATIVES OF COMPETENT AUTHORITIES IDENTIFIED UNDER THE CONVENTION ON EARLY NOTIFICATION OF A NUCLEAR ACCIDENT AND THE CONVENTION ON ASSISTANCE IN THE CASE OF A NUCLEAR ACCIDENT OR RADIOLOGICAL EMERGENCY

# REPORT OF THE FOURTH MEETING

#### **Summary**

The Fourth Meeting of Competent Authorities was convened by the IAEA Secretariat as a Technical Meeting at IAEA Headquarters, Vienna, Austria from 10 to 13 July 2007. The Meeting was structured as a formal Plenary with separate working sessions. Mr. Finn Ugletveit, NCACG Chairperson, chaired Plenary Sessions and Mr. Jeff Lafortune was engaged by the Secretariat as the Facilitator of the Meeting. H.E. François-Xavier Deniau, Ambassador and Resident Representative of France was invited by the IAEA to open the Meeting.

A total of 96 participants from 56 Member States and 3 international organizations attended the Meeting.

The Meeting reviewed conclusions and outcomes from the Third Meeting, and considered reports on the Secretariat and NCACG activities, on the implementation of the International Action Plan and on activities in the framework of the international emergency management system.

The Meeting discussed recommendations of the Action Plan work and expert groups and proposals for the way forward in the implementation of the Action Plan and in enhancing international emergency management. It also discussed the plan of activities for the IEC and NCACG for the period 2008-2009 and beyond.

The Meeting completed all agenda items with the exception of the Terms of Reference of the NCACG. Following extensive review and discussion of the TOR, the Meeting agreed upon a series of revisions to the TOR and decided to defer adoption of the revised TOR until such time as IAEA Office of Legal Affairs has reviewed and commented upon them with a view to submitting the TOR and comments thereon for final review and endorsement by the competent authorities.

The Meeting re-elected Mr. Finn Ugletveit (Norway) as Chairperson of the NCACG and endorsed selected regional representatives for the next two years.

Twenty-four Meeting's conclusions were prepared in special session and reviewed, amended and agreed upon at the Plenary Session.

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### INTRODUCTION

- 1. The Fourth Meeting of representatives of competent authorities identified under the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (Early Notification Convention) and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (Assistance Convention) took place in Vienna from 10 to 13 July 2007 at the invitation of the International Atomic Energy Agency.
- 2. Ninety-one representatives of competent authorities from 56 Member States attended the Fourth Meeting. Of these, 88 were representatives of competent authorities from 53 Member States that are Party to either the Early Notification Convention or the Assistance Convention or both. The remaining three representatives were from competent authorities of Member States not Party to either Convention (Georgia, Kazakhstan and Moldova).
- 3. Four representatives from the intergovernmental organizations Parties to the two Conventions also attended the Meeting namely three from the European Commission (EC) and one from the World Meteorological Organization. A representative from the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA/OECD) participated in the Meeting as an observer.
- 4. The following documents were prepared and made available for the Meeting<sup>1</sup>.

Information papers	
CAM/INF/2007/01	Progress Report on CA Meeting's Decisions 2005
CAM/INF/2007/02	Report on Relevant IAEA IEC's Activities
CAM/INF/2007/03	Progress Report on NCACG's Activities
CAM/INF/2007/04	IACRNA Progress Report on ConvEx-3 (2008)
CAM/INF/2007/05	Action Plan – Progress Report 2007
CAM/INF/2007/06	International Communication – Report 2007
CAM/INF/2007/07	International Assistance – Report 2007
CAM/INF/2007/08	Plan of the IAEA IEC's Activities 2008-2009
CAM/INF/2007/09	Plan of the NCACG's Activities 2007-2009
CAM/INF/2007/10	Interfacing the ENATOM/ENAC and ECURIE/CoDecS
CAM/INF/2007/11	EURANOS Project – Basic Information
Decision papers	
CAM/DEC/2007/01	International Communication – Proposal for Decision
CAM/DEC/2007/02	Action B.2 – Sources – Proposal for Decision
CAM/DEC/2007/03	Action B.3 – Radiation Monitoring – Proposal for Decision
CAM/DEC/2007/04	Action B.4 – Medical Management – Proposal for Decision
CAM/DEC/2007/05	Action B.5 – Meteorological Products – Proposal for Decision
CAM/DEC/2007/06	Action B.6 – Models – Proposal for Decision
CAM/DEC/2007/07	Action Plan – the Way Forward – Proposal for Decision
CAM/DEC/2007/08	Meeting's Conclusions and Recommendations – Proposal
CAM/DEC/2007/09	NCACG Terms of Reference – Proposal for changes
CAM/DEC/2007/10	Alternative Means for Achieving the Goals

5. List of participants and observers is in Appendix II.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Documents are available on the Action Plan homepage <a href="http://www-ns.iaea.org/tech-areas/emergency/caap/login.asp">http://www-ns.iaea.org/tech-areas/emergency/caap/login.asp</a> or through the ENAC protected web site <a href="http://www-emergency.iaea.org/documents.asp">http://www-ns.iaea.org/tech-areas/emergency/caap/login.asp</a> or through the ENAC protected web site <a href="http://www-emergency.iaea.org/documents.asp">http://www-ns.iaea.org/tech-areas/emergency/caap/login.asp</a> or through the ENAC protected web site <a href="http://www-emergency.iaea.org/documents.asp">http://www-emergency.iaea.org/documents.asp</a>

# **Plenary Session**

## 1. OPENING OF THE MEETING

- 6. Mr. Warren Stern, Head, Incident and Emergency Centre of the IAEA addressed the Meeting on behalf of Mr. Tomohiro Taniguchi, Deputy Director General of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security and expressed the Agency's appreciation for the co-operation shown by Member States in providing experts and resources for past emergency responses, for providing extra-budgetary contributions for improving the response infrastructure and for implementation of the international Action Plan for Strengthening the International Preparedness and Response System for Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies. H.E. François-Xavier Deniau, Ambassador and Resident Representative of France was invited to open the Meeting<sup>2</sup>, drawing attention to France's full commitment towards the implementation of the Notification and Assistance Conventions, the essential role of the Incident and Emergency Centre of the IAEA, and importance of partnerships. Mr. Warren Stern introduced Mr. Finn Ugletveit as the Chairman of the Fourth Meeting, Mr. Jean Jeff Lafortune as the Meeting Facilitator and Mr. Rafael Martincic as the Scientific Secretary of the Meeting.
- 7. Mr. Finn Ugletveit, the Chairman of the Fourth Meeting, then addressed the Meeting. He emphasised the importance of the Meeting and expressed his satisfaction over the number of Competent Authorities and representatives attending the Meeting. He stressed the importance of having the broadest possible representation when discussing the outcomes of the Action Plan and providing guidance and support for the continued implementation of the Plan. Mr. Ugletveit also encouraged the Meeting to provide input to the continued work of the NCACG and to exchange views and experiences on how the cooperation between Competent Authorities regionally and inter regionally can be improved. He finally expressed his confidence that the Meeting would be a success by contributions from all Meeting's attendees.
- 8. Mr. Rafael Martincic, Action Plan Coordinator, IEC and the Scientific Secretary of the Meeting pointed out that the Meeting is a Technical Meeting of the Agency with defined objectives and scope. He stated that this is not a meeting of States Parties to Conventions and that participants of the Meeting are representatives of the competent authorities of Member States, States that are Parties to one or both of the Conventions, and representatives of international intergovernmental organizations that are parties to the Conventions. Observers to the Meeting are representatives of National Warning Points, other States' representatives, representatives of non-Member States and international organizations that are not Parties to either of the Conventions. He then recalled the objectives of the Meeting and the expected outputs, stressing the need for care when discussing issues that are strictly outside the Meeting's mandate.
- 9. Mr. Vince McClelland, of the US Representatives, expressed concerns over the current lack of clarity of the Meeting's competence and work methods. After a brief

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> See Appendix V for opening addresses.

discussion that followed, the Chairman suggested discussing this issue later during the Meeting.

- 10. Mr. Martincic explained the logistics of the Meeting.
- 11. The Meeting adopted the provisional agenda with minor changes (Appendix I).

#### 2. PROGRESS REPORTS

- 12. Mr. Martincic presented IEC/NCACG joint report on outcomes from the Third Meeting (CAM/INF/2007/01). The Meeting noted the report, welcomed the progress made and encouraged the Secretariat and the NCACG to continue to implement the Action Plan in a collaborative way.
- 13. Mr. Ugletveit presented progress report on the NCACG's activities (CAM/INF/2007/03). Mr. Geza Macsuga, NCACG member, briefed the Meeting on the Eastern-European competent authority meeting that took place in Budapest in March 2007. Noting both reports the Meeting expressed its appreciation of the efforts and contributions made by the NCACG.

### 3. ELECTION OF THE NCACG CHAIRPERSON

- 14. Ms. Mette Seyersted, assistant to the NCACG Chairperson summarized the preelection activities and explained the election process. Mr. Lafortune informed the Meeting that there were no other candidates and that the only nominated candidate was Mr. Ugletveit, the current NCACG Chairperson.
- 15. The Meeting re-elected Mr. Ugletveit as the NCACG Chairperson by acclamation. Mr. Ugletveit thanked the participants for their confidence and support.

# **Working Sessions**

**Opinion:** Status and mandate of the Meeting – the IAEA Office of Legal Affairs

16. Further to an intervention during the Opening of the Meeting by the US Representative Mr. McClelland, Mr. Lafortune asked the IAEA Office of Legal Affairs to give its view on the competence and work methods of the Meeting. The following statement was made to the Meeting by Ms. Mona Khalil, Senior Legal Officer:

While the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions call for the designations of competent authorities and points of contact, there is no reference in either Convention to a Meeting of the States Parties or to a Meeting of Competent Authorities. Nonetheless, the Meeting of Competent Authorities has evolved as an ad hoc technical forum wherein IAEA Member States and competent authorities seek consensus on their mutual efforts to improve the notification and assistance mechanisms and to strengthen the emergency preparedness and response system. Thus far, the Meeting of Competent Authorities has functioned on a biennial basis without a formal mandate, terms of reference, reporting mechanism or rules of procedure. In this connection, the General Conference has requested the Secretariat to consider institutionalizing the Meetings of the Competent Authorities.

The Meeting of the Competent Authorities does not have the authority to bind Member States or the policy-making organs of the IAEA either legally or financially. It can however make recommendations on or give guidance to the Secretariat on how best to implement its existing Board of Governors and General Conference authorized mandates to strengthen the emergency preparedness and response system and to implement the International Action Plan.

The Meeting of the Competent Authorities, as welcomed by the General Conference, has also established the NCACG. To the extent that the latter is a subsidiary of the former, the Meeting of Competent Authorities is also competent to establish the terms of reference, election of the Chairman, composition etc. of the NCACG.

The Meeting agreed, in this context, to request the Secretariat to prepare paper on the competence and work methods of the Meeting of the Competent Authorities for consideration at the Fifth CA Meeting.

### 4. ACTION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

- 17. Mr. Martincic presented the overall Action Plan progress report (CAM/INF/2007/05), jointly prepared by the Secretariat and the NCACG.
- 18. Mr. Dominique Rauber, chair of the Work Group on International Communication (WG-A) summarized the work of the WG-A and its respective Expert Groups and pointed out main results achieved as well as some concerns regarding for the implementation phase. He expressed high appreciation for the dedicated work and effort made by the members of the WG-A and especially by all experts working in Expert Groups.
- 19. Mr. Vince McClelland, chair of the Work Group on International Assistance (WG-B) summarized the work of the WG-B and its respective Expert Groups and pointed out main results achieved. He expressed deep appreciation for the work done and thanked all WG-B and Expert Groups members for their efforts and time spent on these tasks.
- 20. The Meeting took note of the reports and recognized the quality and thoroughness of reports as well as importance of close collaboration amongst the Secretariat, the NCACG and the competent authorities in the implementation of achieved results. Meeting expressed sincere thanks and appreciation of the work of both Work Group chairs and in particular of all contributing experts. The Meeting agreed that both work groups (WG-A and WG-B) have concluded their work.

### 5. INTERNATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

21. Mr. Stern reported on the IEC's activities (CAM/INF/2007/02) in the area of standards, technical documents and training material, and incident and emergency response arrangements (ENATOM, Joint Plan, incident reporting, INES). Noting the report, the Meeting welcomed the progress made in enhancing preparedness and response systems and generally supported the initiatives and work performed by the IEC. The Meeting also noted the IEC initiative to establish a global radiation monitoring data exchange system and requested further information, including resource implications, regarding this initiative.

- 22. Mr. Martincic presented progress report on the preparation of ConvEx-3 (2008) exercise (CAM/INF/2007/04) to be conducted on 9-10 July 2008. 'Accident State' will be Mexico and the 'accident facility' will be NPP Laguna Verde. He explained concept, scope, objectives and main features of the exercise, and made an appeal to competent authorities to participate in the exercise. The Meeting expressed its appreciation for the work done by the Secretariat in preparing the ConvEx-3 exercise and encouraged competent authorities to participate.
- 23. Mr. Alejandro Cortes Carmona, Mexican National Nuclear Safety and Safeguards Commission, reported on national progress in ConvEx-3 (2008) exercise preparation. The Meeting expressed its appreciation for the work done so far by the Mexican authorities.
- 24. Mr. Gerhard De Vries, DG Joint Research Center, EC, reported on progress achieved in interfacing the ENATOM/ENAC and ECURIE/CoDecS reporting systems (CAM/INF/2007/10). He explained why and how the IAEA (ENATOM/ENAC) and the EC (ECURIE) emergency reporting systems have been interfaced. The Meeting took note of the report and expressed its appreciation of the work performed.
- 25. Mr. Wolfgang Raskob, Institut f. Kern- und Energietechnik Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe, reported on objectives and results achieved in the EURANOS project European approach to nuclear and radiological emergency management and rehabilitation strategies (CAM/INF/2007/11). The Meeting took note of the report and recognized the need for these efforts to be coordinated with the Action Plan.
- 26. Mr. Martincic summarized the main features of the IAEA Response Assistance Network (RANET) and called upon competent authorities to register their national assistance capabilities in RANET. Stressing the importance of the international assistance the Meeting took note of the RANET documents and agreed that competent authorities will take steps to register their national assistance capabilities in RANET. The representative of the US competent authority, Ms. Ann Heinrich, announced her country's intention to register two assets (triage and modelling capabilities) in RANET at the latest by the end of the year. The Meeting welcomed the announcement.

### 6. PROPOSALS TO THE MEETING

27. Mr. McClelland reported on the current status of the work on enhancing the international management system (CAM/DEC/2007/10) and proposed alternative means for achieving the goals envisioned on the originally proposed development of a Code of Conduct on International Emergency Management for Radiation Events. More than 15 representatives participated in the discussion that followed. All the opinions were noted and in particular the French position on the Code of Conduct. The French representative explained that as stated by HE Ambassador Deniau, in his opening statement, France does not support the proposed Code of Conduct as, more generally, it does not support the proliferation of this type of document whose status is unclear. Especially, as far as emergency preparedness is concerned, two Conventions already exist. These are binding texts with clear obligations for IAEA Member States which ratified them. The French representative added that should experts of the field deem complementary documents to be necessary, France would support their development within the safety standards series.

Belgium, India and Pakistan supported the French position. At the end, the Meeting reaffirmed the need to strengthen the international framework for emergency preparedness and response and agreed with the intent of the proposed recommendations. It emphasized the importance for the Secretariat to identify suitable alternatives and to continue its efforts towards a strengthened international framework.

- 28. Mr. Rauber presented and explained recommendations prepared by the Work and Expert Groups A (CAM/DEC/2007/01) for the way forward in the area of international communication. The presentation triggered valuable discussion. The Meeting expressed its appreciation of the efforts made by that group. The Meeting recognized the quality and thoroughness of the final report. The Meeting agreed, in general, with the WG-A technical recommendations and noted that the report represents a sound basis for implementation. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to investigate options for implementation taking into account the report as well as the practicality and the availability of resources. The Meeting also agreed that the Work Group A has concluded its work.
- 29. Mr. McClelland presented and explained recommendations prepared by the Work and Expert Groups B (CAM/DEC/2007/02-06) for the way forward in the area of international assistance. As a practical example of implementation of recommendation (1) Mr. Tony Cotterill, the representative for New Zealand and a member of EG B.2, demonstrated mock-up software for the Radiological Source Support System and (2) Mr. Michael Bradley, demonstrated a U.S. developed prototype of the International Exchange Program (IXP) that provided plume modelling and dose projection capability that competent authorities could access through the IEC. This system was developed based on ideas that emanated from the B.5 EG; however, it was not vetted through the B.5 EG prior to demonstration and thus, was not endorsed by or included as part of the B.5 EG report. The presentations and demonstrations did trigger vivid discussion. The Meeting recognized the quality and thoroughness of the work reported by the B.5 EG. In general, the Meeting agreed with the recommendations and noted that the recommendations represent a sound basis for implementation. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to investigate options for implementation, taking into account the reports as well as the practicality and the availability of resources, and the need to work closely with related IAEA programmes. The Meeting also agreed that the Work Group B has concluded its work
- 30. Mr. Martincic explained envisaged strategy for further implementation of the Action Plan (CAM/DEC/2007/07). The Meeting took note and after discussion agreed with the proposed strategy. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to post the draft implementation plan (approach, tasks and schedule) on the Action Plan website for review and comments prior to its finalization. The Meeting requested that follow up activities from the Work Groups A and B should be addressed in the implementation plan. The Meeting also noted the importance of prioritization, the need to take into account regional needs, the availability of resources and interlink with the work plan of the NCACG.
- 31. Ms. Seyersted presented the proposal for some amendments to the Terms of Reference for the NCACG (CAM/DEC/2007/09). Following extensive discussion and

review of the proposals<sup>3</sup> additional amendment proposals were made at the Meeting. The Meeting expressed general support for the continuation of the NCACG and agreed upon a series of amendments to the Terms of Reference relating to: (1) the inclusion of a term limit for the Chairperson and members to two consecutive terms with the provision that if there are no nominees for either a Chairperson or one ore more members or alternates, the current Chairperson, member(s) or alternate(s) may continue for one additional term; (2) linking the election procedures for the NCACG Chairperson to the election procedures for the Chairman of the IAEA General Conference; (3) increasing the NCACG membership by one representative from the international organizations co-sponsors of the Joint Radiation Emergency Management Plan of the International Organizations; and (4) adding a review mechanism to the NCACG Work Plan (referred to in the Terms of Reference amendment proposal para 19) e.g. the Work Plan is endorsed when reviewed by competent authorities and international organizations through the regional representatives.

- 32. Mr. Ugletveit proposed the framework for planning the NCACG activities for the coming period 2007-2009 (CAM/INF/2007/09). The Meeting took note of the proposed framework and after discussion agreed that the Work Plan for the coming period should be submitted to the competent authorities for review and endorsement prior to December 2007.
- 33. Mr. Stern summarized the IEC's activities that are planned for the period 2008-2009 (CAM/INF/2007/08). The Meeting noted the plan and welcomed the information provided. Recognizing the importance of streamlining the reporting systems and enhancing the quality management system, the Meeting encouraged the IEC to continue its efforts.

#### 7. SPECIAL SESSIONS

- 34. Based on reports, proposals to the Meeting and discussions held, the Meeting Working Group composed of the Meeting Chairman, Session Facilitator, Chairs of WG-A and WG-B and the IAEA Secretariat prepared a consolidated proposal of the Meeting's conclusions.
- 35. Representatives of competent authorities from every region met to discuss NCACG membership, select new regional NCACG members and their alternates, and discuss regional activities and related issues, such as a proposal from New Zealand ffor the formation of 'small user groups'. Current NCACG members moderated the discussions. Upon request from the African representatives present at the Meeting, Mr Ugletveit assisted during the first part of the African regional meeting. Findings and conclusions were reported by all regions at the Plenary Session.
- 36. An ad-hoc work group of interested representatives of competent authorities met to review and discuss a proposal for the document preparation profile for the revision of Preparedness and Response for a Nuclear or Radiological Emergency (GS-R-2). The work group generally agreed with the proposed outline.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Meeting reviewed, discussed and revised paragraph by paragraph

# **Plenary Session**

## 8. NCACG MATTERS

- 37. Regional representatives and NCACG members reported the outcomes of the six regional meetings that were convened in parallel on Thursday, 12 July 2007. Ms. Sidika Jerska Wambani (Kenya) reported on behalf of the African region. The region selected her as a NCACG member and Ms. Azza Hammou from Tunisia as her alternate. Mr. Stephen Solomon (Australia) reported that the Asian and Australasian region had selected him as a NCACG member and Mr. Zhexiong Chao from China, Ms. Bushra Nasim from Pakistan and Mr. Anthony Cotterill from New Zealand as alternates. Mr. Geza Macsuga (Hungary) reported that the Eastern European region had selected him as a member and Mr. Halil Okyar from Turkey as his alternate. Ms. Joanne Ford (Canada) reported that the North American region, including Mexico had selected Mr. Jose Luis Delgado Guardado as a member and Mr. Alejandro Cortes Carmona as his alternate (both from Mexico). Mr. Osvaldo Jordan (Argentina) reported that the South and Central American region, including the Caribbean, had selected Mr. Pablo Jerez Vegueria from Cuba as member and him and Mr. Raul Dos Santos from Brazil as alternates. Finally, Mr. Wim Molhoek (Netherlands) reported that the Western European region had selected Ms. Delphine Xicluna from France as member and Ms Ciara McMahon from Ireland as her alternate.
- 38. The Meeting thanked the outgoing regional representatives. Mr. Osvaldo Jordan (Argentina), Mr Jean Patrice Auclair (Canada), Mr Wim Molhoek (Netherlands) and Shams Elegba (Nigeria) for their commitment and contributions, and endorsed all selected NCACG members and their alternates.

#### 9. CONCLUSIONS OF THE MEETING

- 39. Meeting's conclusions prepared by the Meeting's Working Group were distributed to all Meeting attendees. The Meeting reviewed each proposed conclusion and endorsed most of them, some with minor changes. All endorsed Meeting's conclusions are recorded in Appendix III.
- 40. The Meeting agreed that the NCACG Terms of Reference including the amendment proposals that were agreed to be incorporated into the current Terms of Reference should be reviewed by the IAEA Office of Legal Affairs and then distributed to the Meeting participants for final adoption. The revised Terms of Reference will enter into force as soon as possible after adoption. The Meeting also agreed that the envisaged target date to finalize this process is 30 September 2007.

### 10. CLOSING OF THE MEETING

41. Mr. Taniguchi, Deputy Director General for Nuclear Safety and Security, presented his observations and closing remarks stating that now when the outline of the work in the

future has been accepted, the job of the Secretariat is to convert these initiatives into a coherent programme of concrete, practical steps to strengthen response emergency events. He stressed that continued support in this respect is essential. He thanked all participants for a very constructive and productive meeting<sup>4</sup>.

42. The Meeting Chairman, Mr. Ugletveit thanked the participants, the Session Facilitator and the Secretariat for their contributions to the Meeting and expressed his view that in enhancing the international response system an important step has been made towards achieving its long term sustainability. As re-elected Chairman of the NCACG, he thanked the outgoing regional representatives for their commitment and contributions to the NCACG over the past two years. On behalf of the NCACG he expressed his gratitude to the Chairs of the WG-A and WG-B, Mr. Rauber and Mr. McClelland for their commitment, great work and efforts in achieving the goals of the Action Plan. Finally he thanked Mr. Lafortune for efficiently moderating the meeting as well as the technical support personnel and the Secretariat for a well prepared meeting. The Chairman closed the Meeting at 14:00.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> See Appendix IV for his closing remarks.

# **APPENDIX I: MEETING AGENDA**

# **Plenary Session**

- 1 Opening of the Meeting
- 2 Progress Reports
- 3 Election of the NCACG Chairperson

# **Working Sessions**

- 4 Action Plan Implementation
- 5 International Emergency Management
- 6 Proposals to the Meeting
- 7 Regional CA Meetings

# **Plenary Session**

- 8 NCACG Matters
- 9 Conclusions of the Meeting
- 10 Closing of the Meeting

# APPENDIX II: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS AND OBSERVERS

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### APPENDIX III: MEETING'S CONCLUSIONS

Meeting's conclusions were reviewed, amended and endorsed at Plenary Session on Friday, 13 July 2007.

Conclusion CAM-2007/1

# Meting Objectives and Mandate

The Meeting expressed concern over the current lack of clarity of the Meeting's mandate and, recalling Resolution GC(46)/RES/9, requested the Secretariat to define the legal status and mandate of this Meeting, and the associated work methods, prior to the end of the 2008 GC. The Meeting recognized that this action may also impact the NCACG's Terms of Reference.

Conclusion CAM-2007/2

# Meeting's Decisions 2005

Noting the *Progress Report on 2005 CA Meeting's Decisions* (CAM/INF/2007/01), the Meeting welcomed the progress made and expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the Secretariat and the NCACG towards the improvement of international arrangements for the response to nuclear and radiological (radiation) incidents and emergencies. The Meeting encouraged the Secretariat and the NCACG to continue to collaborate to enhance and improve international preparedness for and response to radiation events for implementation of the Action Plan.

Conclusion CAM-2007/3

# Report on Relevant IAEA IEC's Activities

Noting the *IAEA IEC's Report on Relevant Activities* (CAM/INF/2007/02), the Meeting welcomed the progress made by the Secretariat in enhancing the IEC infrastructure and event reporting, in strengthening in-house preparedness and in helping Member States enhance their emergency response arrangements and capabilities, and generally supported the initiatives and work performed by the IEC. The Meeting recognised the importance of the IEC information bulletin and requested the IEC to continue to produce and publish it (on the web). The Meeting noted the IEC initiatives to establish a global radiation monitoring data exchange system and requested further information, including any resource implications (financial, personnel, in-kind, or otherwise), regarding this initiative.

Conclusion CAM-2007/4

#### Plan of IAEA Activities 2008-2009

Noting the IEC's planned activities for 2008-09 (CAM/INF/2007/08), the Meeting welcomed the information and encouraged the IEC to continue its efforts.

Conclusion CAM-2007/5

## Emergency Preparedness and Response Review – EPREV Missions

Noting the importance of emergency preparedness review (EPREV) missions for an independent appraisal of a country's preparedness to respond to any radiation event against international requirements the Meeting encouraged Member States to request EPREV Missions for an

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independent appraisal of the country's level of preparedness and for developing action plans to strengthen and enhance the level of preparedness.

Conclusion CAM-2007/6

## ConvEx-3 (2008) Exercise

The Meeting expressed its appreciation for the work done by Mexican authorities and the Secretariat in preparing the ConvEx-3 (2008) exercise. The Meeting encouraged the Secretariat to continue its effort to promote participation by Member States in this exercise to test elements of their emergency response system and international coordination arrangements.

# **Action Plan Implementation**

Conclusion CAM-2007/7

## Action Plan - Progress Report 2007

The Meeting took note of the Secretariat and the NCACG Action Plan progress report (CAM/INF/2007/05), and the continued importance of close collaboration amongst Member States, the Secretariat, the NCACG and the competent authorities for its implementation.

Conclusion CAM-2007/8

# **Enhancing International Communication**

The Meeting took note of the progress report by the Work Group on International Communication (WG-A) *International Communication – Report 2007* (CAM/INF/2007/06), the Summary Report (CAM/DEC/2007/01) and the associated WG-A report. The Meeting expressed its appreciation of the efforts made by that group. The Meeting recognized the quality and thoroughness of the final report. The Meeting agreed, in general, with the WG-A technical recommendations and noted that the report represents a sound technical basis for enhancing international communications. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to investigate options for implementation of the technical recommendations taking into account the resource implications (financial, personnel, in-kind, or otherwise), and the practicality and availability of resources for implementation. The Meeting also agreed that the Work Group A has concluded its work.

Conclusion CAM-2007/9

#### **Enhancing International Assistance**

The Meeting took note of the progress report by the Work Group on International Assistance (WG-B) *International Assistance – Report 2007* (CAM/INF/2007/07), the Summary Reports prepared by the Work Group and its Experts Groups, B.2 to B.6. (CAM/DEC/2007/02 – 06), and the demonstration software for the Radiological Source Support System (RSSS). The Meeting recognized the quality and thoroughness of the work reported. In general, the Meeting agreed with the recommendations and noted that the recommendations represent a sound basis for implementation. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to investigate options for implementation taking into account resource implications (financial, personnel, in-kind, or otherwise), and the practicality and the availability of resources for implementation of the reports, and the need to work closely with other related IAEA programmes. The Meeting also agreed that the Work Group B has concluded its work.

Conclusion CAM-2007/10

### EG B.2 Recommendations

On the recommendation for a centralized registry of radioactive sources (EG B.2), the Meeting noted that the Secretariat should instead focus on encouraging national registries and supporting information exchange. On the RSSS, the Meeting took note of the fact that the demonstrated software is made available to any authorized user, and recognized that this is not, in any way, intended to impose a change on existing systems. Also, there is a need to identify more clearly the sometimes disparate needs of States and provide innovative means of accessing expert knowledge. The Meeting also reemphasized the need to avoid duplication of any ensuing system with systems already under development by the IAEA, and agreed that any further development of such a system should be closely coordinated with the IEC.

Conclusion CAM-2007/11

#### EG B.3 Recommendations

On the recommendations for the development of compatible arrangements for radiation monitoring and interpretation of results (EG B.3), the Meeting recognized the need for standardization of specifications, to address the need for consistency in products resulting from modelling and monitoring, and the importance of updating and maintaining compatibility of information exchange formats (XML).

Conclusion CAM-2007/12
The Way Forward

The Meeting took note of the Decision Paper International Action Plan – the Way Forward (CAM/DEC/2007/07) and agreed with the proposed strategy. The Meeting requested the Secretariat to post the draft implementation plan (approach, tasks and schedule) on the Action Plan website for review and comments prior to its finalization. The Meeting requested that follow up activities from the reports generated by Work Groups A and B should be addressed in the implementation plan. The Meeting also noted the importance of prioritization of recommendations and the work process, taking into account regional needs and resource availability (financial, personnel, in-kind, or otherwise), and the interlink with the work plan of the NCACG.

Conclusion CAM-2007/13

#### Sustainable Infrastructure

The Meeting recognized that the Action Plan ends in 2009 and that priority must be given to establishing and institutionalizing permanent mechanisms for implementation of approved recommendations developed by Work Groups A and B and to ensure the long term sustainability of the international emergency preparedness and response system. In that respect, the Meeting agreed that the Secretariat should establish, as identified in the Action Plan, Work Group C on sustainable infrastructure

Conclusion CAM-2007/14

## Financing Action Plan Implementation

On the issue of financing for Action Plan activities, the Meeting requested the Secretariat, in collaboration with the NCACG, to provide a cost and resource estimate for the implementation

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of the Action Plan. The Meeting agreed that Work Group C, to be established, should also assist by providing an outside assessment of the financial and human resources required by the IEC and an estimate of the cost for full Member State compliances.

# **On International Emergency Management**

Conclusion CAM-2007/15

## International Emergency Management System for Radiation Events

The Meeting took note of recommendations presented in CAM/DEC/2007/10. The Meeting reaffirmed the need to strengthen the international framework for emergency preparedness and response. The Meeting agreed with the intent of the recommendations, and emphasized the importance for the Secretariat to identify suitable alternatives.

Conclusion CAM-2007/16

#### Revision of GS-R-2

An ad-hoc work group meeting of representatives took place to review the document preparation profile for the revision of GS-R-2. This work group generally agreed with the proposed outline. The Meeting took note of this reported outcome.

Conclusion CAM-2007/17

## Interfacing of ENAC and ECURIE/CoDecS Reporting System

The Meeting took note of the report on the interfacing of ENAC and ECURIE/CoDecS emergency information exchange system (CAM/INF/2007/10) and expressed its appreciation of the work for harmonizing the systems and to the EU for bearing the cost associated with harmonizing the systems.

Conclusion CAM-2007/18

# **EURANOS Project**

The Meeting took note of the report on the European Union's EURANOS Project which brings together best practices, knowledge and technology in Europe to enhance the preparedness for response to radiation emergencies and long term rehabilitation of contaminated areas. The Meeting recognized the need for these efforts to be coordinated with the Action Plan.

Conclusion CAM-2007/19

# IAEA Response Assistance Network – RANET

Stressing the importance of the international assistance and harmonized assistance capabilities the Meeting took note of the RANET documents and expressed its appreciation for the work performed. The Meeting agreed that Competent Authorities will take steps to register their national assistance capabilities in RANET in accordance with GC(50)/RES/10. The Meeting welcomed the US announcement to register two assets: Triage and International Exchange Program (IXP).

Conclusion CAM-2007/20

### Urging Non-Party Member States to Adopt Emergency Conventions

The Meeting requested the Secretariat to continue its ongoing effort to encourage its Member States to adopt the two Conventions.

#### On the NCACG Matters

Conclusion CAM-2007/21

## Progress Report on Past NCACG's Activities

Noting the *Progress Report on the NCACG's Activities 2005-2007* (CAM/INF/2007/03), the Meeting expressed its appreciation of the efforts and contributions made by the NCACG and Working Groups. The Meeting supported the continuation of the NCACG.

Conclusion CAM-2007/22

### NCACG Activities 2007-2009

The Meeting took note of the proposed framework for planning the NCACG activities for the coming work period 2007-2009 and agreed that the work plan for that period should be submitted to the competent authorities for review and approval prior to December 2007.

Conclusion CAM-2007/23

### NCACG Terms of Reference

The Meeting took note of the proposal for revised NCACG Terms of Reference (CAM/DEC/2007/09) and made further proposals. The Meeting agreed with revisions proposed for the Terms of Reference, the substantive changes thereof are contained in the minutes of the Meeting. The Meeting also agreed that the revised Terms of Reference will be distributed to the Meeting participants for final approval and will enter into force as soon as possible after approval by the Meeting participants with a target date of 30 September 2007.

Conclusion CAM-2007/24

# NCACG Chairperson and NCACG Members

The Meeting re-elected the NCACG Chairperson (Mr. Finn Ugletveit). The Meeting expressed its gratitude to Mr. Finn Ugletveit for his commitment and hard work over the past two years. The Meeting thanked the outgoing members for their commitment and work, and endorsed the following members of the NCACG:

Region	Position	Name	Country
Africa	Primary:	Ms. Sidika Jeska WAMBANI	Kenya
	Alternate:	Ms. Azza HAMMOU	Tunisia
Asia and Australasia	Primary:	Mr. Stephen SOLOMON	Australia
	Alternate:	Mr. Zhexiong CHAO	China
	Alternate:	Ms. Bushra NASIM	Pakistan
	Alternate:	Mr. Anthony COTTERILL	New Zealand
Eastern Europe	Primary:	Mr. Geza MACSUGA	Hungary
	Alternate:	Mr. Halil OKYAR	Turkey

Region	Position	Name	Country
North America (including Mexico)	Primary:	Mr. Jose Luis DELGADO GUARDADO	Mexico
	Alternate:	Mr. Alejandro CORTES CARMONA	Mexico
South and Central America and Caribbean	Primary:	Mr. Pablo JEREZ VEGUERIA	Cuba
	Alternate:	Mr. Osvaldo JORDAN	Argentina
	Alternate:	Mr. Raul DOS SANTOS	Brazil
Western Europe	Primary:	Ms. Delphine XICLUNA	France
	Alternate:	Ms Ciara McMAHON	Ireland

# **APPENDIX IV: OPENING AND CLOSING ADDRESSES**

## **OPENING ADDRESS**

# Warren Stern Head, Incident and Emergency Centre, IAEA, Vienna

On behalf of the IAEA, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to Vienna for this, the Fourth Meeting of Representatives of Competent Authorities identified under the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions.

I apologize for the absence of our Deputy Director General Taniguchi who had expected to open this meeting, but has been called off on important business.

I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation for the wide range of co-operation that you and your governments have given to international emergency preparedness and response efforts, by providing political support, experts and resources for past responses, and by providing extrabudgetary contributions, to improve our response infrastructure and for implementation of the international Action Plan. Every government represented here has played an important role in these efforts and I thank you for that

I would like to extend my personal thanks to the government of Norway and the GRULAC—the group of Latin American and Caribbean countries, which have given invaluable political support to our shared emergency efforts in the IAEA Board of Governors and other forums this year. In addition, I would like to express my appreciation to the governments of the United States, Japan, Slovenia, and Romania, which have provided essential financial contributions to the IAEA emergency infrastructure this year. I would also like to take this opportunity to express the gratitude to Mexico for hosting ConvEx-3 exercise in 2008.

As we are all aware, the government of France has consistently provided expertise in so many of our responses. France is a global leader in its nuclear and radiological emergency preparedness. For those reasons, we have asked His Excellency Francois-Xavier Deniau, the Ambassador from France to provide his insights in introductory remarks this afternoon. We very much appreciate the time that the Ambassador has graciously agreed to take time out of his busy schedule to provide his thoughts on our work.

We are here today because of the Conventions on Assistance and Early Notification. These two Treaties are the cornerstone of our efforts. As such, I would also like to take note of the new Parties to the emergency conventions. Since our last Competent Authorities meeting, four new countries and organizations have joined the Early Notification Convention. These are Cameroon, Chile, Qatar and EURATOM. In addition, six new countries have accepted the Assistance Conventions. These are Cameroon, Columbia, El Salvador, Iceland, Qatar and Euratom. I welcome all the new representatives to this meeting.

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We now have a total of 99 parties that have accepted the obligations of the Notification Convention and 97 that have accepted the Assistance Convention. It is our goal that the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions are universally accepted as a basis for planning for and responding to nuclear and radiological emergencies.

We all need to think about what we are here for this week and what we need to accomplish. We need to set goals for ourselves as there are both important opportunities and important challenges ahead.

The most obvious task for us this week is to decide on the recommendations made by the working groups under the International Action Plan for further enhancement of national and international preparedness and response arrangements and capabilities.

You have in front of you the recommendations that came from the hard work of the working groups and expert groups over the past two years. Your job is to decide whether you wish to accept, reject, or amend these recommendations. This is a key challenge for you as these recommendations will chart the course for our technical work over the next decade.

In addition to the technical issues, there are important policy issues for us to consider as well. You may recall that two years ago the Competent Authorities meeting concluded that there were important gaps in the international legal framework that existed for incidents and emergencies. The conventions that are the basis of our work were completed two decades ago in a very hurried manner in response to the Chornobyl accident. They reflect the concerns of that day.

Two years ago, the Competent Authorities meeting asked the IAEA to seek to close these gaps via the negotiation of a Code of Conduct on emergency issues.

However, the proposal has not been universally accepted. Consequently, this meeting must consider what other mechanisms we can and should use to enhance the global legal infrastructure.

We also have developed together and completed this year the main documents for implementation of the Response Assistance Network (RANET). Its major objectives are to strengthen the IAEA's capability to provide assistance and advice, and to co-ordinate the provision of assistance as specified within the framework of the Assistance Convention, and to promote emergency preparedness. But the RANET is now largely an empty shell. We have the mandate at this meeting to try to determine how we can best fill this empty shell with information that is both accurate and useful, so that we can realize the potential of the RANET. We can create together and for the first time a truly global database of resources that can be requested in the case of a radiological or nuclear emergency. This is a true opportunity.

I mentioned a moment ago that there are both opportunities and threats.

On a policy level, we also need to consider whether we need to take any action in the context of the new WHO International Health Regulations. As some of you may know, the WHO interprets these regulations in a way that considers radiation as a disease and thus certain radiation accidents are considered reportable events.

As emergency managers, our key function is to ensure clarity in our actions and procedures....to remove ambiguities. Mistakes in responding to emergencies are inevitable. But our job is to make sure that such mistakes or delays are not due to a failure to plan.

The IHR implementation could create confusion regarding prompt reporting and response to nuclear and radiological events, which could cost lives. We, as a group, must consider whether a separate reporting mechanism is a positive or harmful event and what action we should take in response, to ensure clarity.

We, as a group, have both challenges and opportunities ahead of us. The opportunities are the result of years of hard work by you, the Competent Authorities under the emergency conventions. I hope that this meeting will help to focus the results of this hard work into a coherent programme of concrete, practical steps to strengthen emergency response capability worldwide.

I look forward to the results of this meeting and your continued support for the IAEA emergency efforts.

Once again, welcome to Vienna. I wish you a very constructive and productive meeting.

I will now pass the floor to Ambassador Deniau who will provide his important insights into our work. You have in the package we distributed a translation of these remarks.

# KEYNOTE SPEECH

# By S.E. Mr. François-Xavier Deniau

Ambassador, Permanent Representative of France to the UN organizations

#### Mr. Chairman,

## Ladies and gentlemen,

I feel truly honoured to make some opening comments to this important conference and I would like to thank the Secretariat of the IAEA for inviting me to do so. I would like to update you on actions taken by France with regard to the 1986 Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident Early Notification and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency Conventions.

The subject matter of your work is of the highest importance, generating, as it will, broad public attention. Given the latest international developments, this meeting cannot be more timely.

# Importance of nuclear safety

In the context of nuclear renaissance, which is now emerging, safety is important above all matters and must enjoy an absolute priority. France is attached to the good international practices

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as well as to the compliance with the highest standards for nuclear safety requirements, which should be applicable worldwide.

There is a strong need for cooperation between regulators and a need for harmonization of regulatory practices, for the benefit of regulators, operators and, above all, for the benefit of a high level of nuclear safety worldwide.

# National infrastructure & international cooperation

Regulating safety is a national responsibility. However, radiation risks may transcend national borders, and international cooperation serves to promote and enhance safety globally by exchanging experience and by improving capabilities to control hazards, to prevent accidents, to respond to emergencies and to mitigate any harmful consequences.

France therefore supports measures aimed at promoting good international practices for nuclear safety. Consistent with its statuary mandate, the IAEA has constituted an important set of international safety standards that are the global reference for protecting people and the environment and provide the basis for States to demonstrate that they are meeting these obligations.

# **Importance of Conventions**

In this context the international cooperation after the Chernobyl accident in 1986 led to the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and to the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency. These conventions have been ratified by nearly 100 countries and international organisations and we believe it is in our interest to maintain and reinforce the legal foundations of the current international emergency preparedness and response system.

# Importance of partnerships

The full implementation of the provisions of the notification and assistance conventions, international standards and approaches, to promote consistency in support of States to meet their international obligations constitutes the important requirements relevant to nuclear safety and security. We would like to encourage those states which have not yet done so to sign and ratify relevant international instruments and implement them.

For us the priority lies with the full implementation of the two conventions but also the existing IAEA safety standards such as the safety fundamentals, the safety requirements and the safety guides, prepared and reviewed through the relevant IAEA safety standards committees. In this respect it seems to us unnecessary at this stage to develop a new instrument such as the draft Code of Conduct on the International Emergency Management System. We believe that it can distract the scarce resources of the Secretariat and its Member States. We believe that it could lead to confusion over the status of the conventions and the role of the existing IAEA safety standards that are intended for regulatory activities in support of States in meeting their international obligation. However the domain of emergency preparedness is vast and some of the provisions of the draft code are valid and may well be taken on board as basis for safety requirements in the frame of existing procedures for review by IAEA safety standards committees.

#### **Essential Role of the IAEA**

France will continue to favour a common approach, working hand in hand with the IAEA for matters related to nuclear safety and radiation protection:

- By sharing our experience and ideas;
- By a common sharing of our understanding: (i) of the level of safety and security in nuclear facilities (ii) of radioactive sources (iii) of dismantling (iv) of radioactive waste and spent fuel storage facilities;
- By offering our cooperation for adequate emergency preparedness; and last
- By our contribution to the work done for the preparation of safety standards in order to encourage their implementation

# **Emergency Response and focus on over expositions**

The two conventions aiming at strengthening the International Preparedness and Response System for Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies, mitigating consequences by an exchange of information and offering fast assistance mechanisms.

However it is necessary to better prepare ourselves towards radiological emergencies since we have noted today a slight increase of incidents related to the utilisation of radioactive materials. If we look over the past decade, we observe that the industrial sector counts for approximately half of the total number of serious radiological accidents. The critical accidents, caused by an unexpected nuclear chain reaction, are taking a special share in these figures - despite their low frequency of occurrence, since a high number of victims occurred over the past decades, with severe injuries and deaths, and considering the mystery in which some events have been kept.

Finally, the hypothesis of major criminal acts involving highly radioactive sources must now be taken into account, because of their possible use by terrorist organisations in suicide actions, as has been observed for other cases.

I'd wish to evoke a recent evolution concerning the significant increase of the number of radioprotection accidents affecting patients treated by radiotherapy, which requires an appropriate transparency policy allowing the public and the media to have a right perception of the seriousness of these accidents. The expansion of the use of ionising radiations in radiotherapy and the apparition of equipments and protocols more and more complexes may explain, partly, these incidents but not justify them.

Important efforts were made in France after accidental overexposure were reported to the hospital centre of Epinal (Vosges) and to University Hospital Centre of Toulouse. France proposed to share with IAEA the feedback resulting from these events linked to radiotherapy because today, there are more irradiation accidents in radiotherapy than all other fields put together. The French National Safety Authority therefore planned to develop the French inspection programme which will lead, in 2007, to a visit in 180 radiotherapy centres in order to strengthen the notification system of radioprotection events. To this end, A seriousness scale has been elaborated to facilitate the information to the public and better coordinate the work of quality insurance in radiotherapy services.

Dealing now with the essential role of the IEC, the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre, I'd like, Mr. Chair, to quote the statement to which France associated itself during the G8 Summit of

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Heiligendamm, in June 2007: "However, we recognize that we must also enhance as necessary our ability to effectively respond to nuclear and radiological accidents and incidents if they do occur. We welcome the establishment of the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre and will support the IAEA in this work."

We congratulate the IEC teams for the professionalism they showed during recent accident notifications and for the excellence of the crisis management.

France reaffirms its commitment to keep on sharing the know-how of its competent organisms in the fields of emergency intervention and diagnose& therapeutic assistance, result of the application, for many years, of researches conducted in France on irradiation accidents.

France provided its expertise and received many international accidents victims who were transferred in our country to be treated. I'd like to mention the contribution of French organisms (notably IRSN and Hôpital Percy) that helped [assisted], in 2006, 2 victims of serious irradiation which occurred in Chilli and Belgium.

I note the feedback of different international events for one decade shows it is necessary [capital] to associate dosimetry physicians to medical and surgery teams in order to define a therapeutic strategy in a multidisciplinary framework. This same feedback proved that the frequency - fortunately low - of radiological or nuclear accidents occurring in the world created in the field of medicine a similar situation to the one existing for the orphans illness that can't beneficiate from sustainable and targeted research programmes. But the only way to maintain quality experts on a topic would be to keep a long term activity of specific investigation.

#### Mr. Chairman,

France is decided to maintain its commitment in nuclear safety, on a national and international level in order to promote the cooperation with the IAEA. International Convention have an essential role to play and the number of high level representatives of competent authorities today present at this meeting illustrate the vitality and utility of these conventions.

This is the message I'd wish to deliver this afternoon. I thank you for your attention and wish you a very fruitful work.

## **CLOSING REMARKS**

# Mr. T. Taniguchi

Deputy Director General for Nuclear Safety and Security, IAEA, Vienna

It is my pleasure to be able to close this, the Fourth Meeting of Representatives of Competent Authorities identified under the Early Notification and Assistance Conventions.

I know you have all worked hard this week to forge a consensus on a wide range of issues. Some issues were technical in nature, such as many of the recommendations made by the working groups under the Action plan. Some were more policy oriented, such as the decision on how to proceed to close the gaps that exist in the international legal framework related to international emergency preparedness and response.

Our common challenge is to capture and disseminate the experience from the relatively few cases so that all of us can learn from it and build upon it in preparing for future emergencies that we or our successors might be faced with. To do this we need to preserve, and continuously seek to improve, the knowledge base we have, and to make that knowledge available in a readily usable form to all those who might need it. And I hope that the meetings such as this can build up a networking effect that can help to focus these initiatives into a coherent programme of concrete, practical steps to strengthen emergency response capability worldwide.

We did not reach consensus on all issues, but that is to be expected from a group as diverse as this. The key is that we did agree on the most important issues and we did establish at this meeting a firm foundation for future work.

The Action Plan has a broader scope than the Conventions alone. I understand that a number of questions were raised regarding the status and mandate of this meeting and the Secretariat was asked to clarify these issues. We will work to do so in the coming months. There is also a need to consider how best to address the challenges of streamlining the various networks for incident and emergency information exchange.

I also understand the Competent Authorities welcomed the work and work plans outlined by the Secretariat for the IEC. I am pleased with that endorsement. We are here to server you, our member states.

At this meeting, you discussed at great length the need to establish sustainable emergency infrastructures. In that regard, I would like to express my appreciation for the wide range of cooperation that you and your countries have given to the Agency, by providing experts and resources for past responses, and by providing extrabudgetary contributions, both in the form of funds and through in-kind contributions for improving the response infrastructure.

I am also pleased that this group agreed to establish a working group on sustainability that would provide an outside assessment of the financial and human resources required by the IEC. I very much look forward to the results of your work and hope your initial assessment can be accomplished before the General Conference this year. The IEC will provide any assistance you need in this effort.

Now that the outline of our work in the future has been accepted, our job is to convert these initiatives into a coherent programme of concrete, practical steps to strengthen response emergency events. I look forward to your continued support in this.

Once again, thank you for a very constructive and productive meeting.