



# Board of Governors

**GOV/2024/43**

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Item 8(c) of the provisional agenda  
(GOV/2024/52 and Add.1)

# Implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic

*Report by the Director General*

## **A. Introduction**

1. On 31 August 2023, the Director General submitted a report to the Board of Governors (Board) on the implementation of the NPT Safeguards Agreement in the Syrian Arab Republic (Syria) (GOV/2023/42). This report covers relevant developments since that date.

## **B. Background**

2. In his report to the Board in May 2011,<sup>1</sup> the then Director General provided the Agency's assessment that, based on all the information available to the Agency and its technical evaluation of that information, it was very likely that the building at the Dair Alzour site, destroyed by Israel in 2007,<sup>2</sup> was a nuclear reactor which should have been declared to the Agency.<sup>3</sup> Concerning three other locations, allegedly

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<sup>1</sup> GOV/2011/30, para. 33.

<sup>2</sup> In March 2018, authorities in Israel acknowledged publicly that it destroyed a building at the Dair Alzour site; see the statement issued by the Prime Minister of Israel, Benjamin Netanyahu, on 21 March 2018 regarding the Dair Alzour Operation PM Netanyahu Statement on September 2007 Deir ez-Zor Operation | Prime Minister's Office ([www.gov.il](http://www.gov.il)).

<sup>3</sup> For more detail on the background to this issue see GOV/2023/42, Section B.

functionally related to that site,<sup>4</sup> the Agency was unable to provide an assessment concerning their nature or operational status.<sup>5</sup>

3. In June 2011, the Board adopted, by a vote, resolution GOV/2011/41, in which it, *inter alia*, found that Syria's undeclared construction of a nuclear reactor at Dair Alzour and failure to provide design information for the facility constituted non-compliance by Syria with its obligations under its NPT Safeguards Agreement with the Agency. The Board called upon Syria to remedy urgently its non-compliance and provide the Agency with updated reporting under its Safeguards Agreement and access to all information, sites, material and persons necessary for the Agency to verify such reporting and resolve all outstanding questions so that the Agency could provide the necessary assurances as to the exclusively peaceful nature of Syria's nuclear programme. The Board requested the Director General to continue his efforts to implement fully the Agency's Safeguards Agreement with Syria and to report any significant developments to the Board and to the Security Council, as appropriate, and decided to remain seized of the matter.

4. In February 2012, in response to a proposal by the Agency to hold further bilateral discussions on the outstanding safeguards issues, Syria indicated to the Agency that it would provide a detailed response at a later time, noting the difficult prevailing security situation in the country. Prior to the start of the current reporting period, the Agency had not received a response from Syria to resolve outstanding questions regarding the Dair Alzour site and the three other locations.

5. In August 2023, the Director General wrote to H.E. Mr Faisal Mekdad, Syria's Minister of Foreign Affairs and Expatriates, reiterating his willingness to engage with Syria with a view to discussing unresolved safeguards issues. The Director General indicated his willingness to agree a suitable arrangement that would allow Syria and the Agency to demonstrate their determination to make progress on these issues.<sup>6</sup>

## C. Developments

6. The Director General, on 19 March 2024, visited Syria and held discussions with President Bashar al-Assad and Foreign Minister Faisal Mekdad in Damascus and agreed a new engagement between the Syrian Arab Republic and the Agency. As a result of those discussions, the Agency, in coordination with the Syrian government, agreed to undertake a process of clarification of the pending issues related to past activities in Syria that require further inquiry in order to exclude any proliferation concern.<sup>7</sup>

7. Following the Director General's initiative, in late June 2024, Syria conducted technical discussions with the Agency concerning the three locations that were allegedly functionally related to the Dair Alzour site,<sup>8</sup> and allowed the Agency to visit two of them. During these visits, Syria permitted the Agency to take environmental samples, which the Agency is currently analyzing. Syria has indicated that it will allow the Agency to visit the third location before the meeting of the Board in November 2024.

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<sup>4</sup> GOV/2008/60 and GOV/2011/41.

<sup>5</sup> GOV/2023/42, para.4.

<sup>6</sup> GOV/2023/42, para. 11.

<sup>7</sup> Director General's Introductory Statement to the Board of Governors, 3 June 2024.

<sup>8</sup> GOV/2023/42, para. 2.

8. As part of its planned verification activities under Syria's NPT Safeguards Agreement, the Agency carried out a physical inventory verification (PIV) at the miniature neutron source reactor (MNSR) in Damascus on 7 May 2024. The Agency also carried out a PIV at a location outside facilities (LOF) in Homs on 8 May 2024.

9. The Agency continues to monitor, through the review of open source information, including satellite imagery, the MNSR, the Dair Alzour site and other locations of safeguards relevance to the Agency.

## **D. Conclusion**

10. The Director General welcomes Syria's renewed engagement with the Agency in relation to the unresolved safeguards issues. The Director General will report to the Board the Agency's findings from all of the above-mentioned visits once the results from the environmental samples taken by the Agency have been analysed, assessed and discussed with Syria.