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**GUIDELINES  
REGARDING THE REVIEW PROCESS  
UNDER THE CONVENTION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY**

**I. INTRODUCTION**

These guidelines, established by the Contracting Parties pursuant to Article 22 of the Convention, are intended to be read in conjunction with the text of the Convention. Their purpose is to provide guidance to the Contracting Parties on the process for reviewing national reports submitted in accordance with Article 5 and thereby to facilitate the efficient review of implementation by the Contracting Parties of their obligations under the Convention.

The aim of the review process should be to achieve a thorough examination of national reports submitted in accordance with Article 5 of the Convention, so that Contracting Parties can learn from each other's solutions to common and individual nuclear safety problems and, above all, contribute to improving nuclear safety worldwide through a constructive exchange of views.

**II. BACKGROUND**

Recognizing that reviews of national reports at periodic meetings pursuant to Article 20 of the Convention could be accomplished more efficiently through the establishment of sub-groups, the Contracting Parties considered two possible approaches:

- (a) 'horizontal' division - each group would discuss a limited subject area. Each delegation would have a representative in each subject group (leading to groups with at least 34 Contracting Parties as members). Each group would discuss the parts of each national report which were relevant to the subject area of the group; and
- (b) 'vertical' division - Contracting Parties would be divided into country groups, each including up to seven or eight Contracting Parties with nuclear installations. Each group would consider in detail the national report of each member of that group, discussing all the subject areas covered by the reports.

The Contracting Parties decided that the 'vertical' approach should provide the basis of review at the first review meeting. Table 1 describes the main steps involved, in chronological order.

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Dividing the Contracting Parties into country groups is intended:

- to ensure that all reports are reviewed in detail and in their entirety, reflecting the concept of “safety as a whole”;
- to enable all Contracting Parties, in accordance with Article 20.3 of the Convention, to seek clarification of and comment on the national reports of all others, both by submitting written questions and comments before review meetings and by speaking in the country groups and at plenary sessions of the review meetings;
- to increase the closeness of international co-operation in dealing with nuclear safety issues and to improve the quality of review;
- to enable Contracting Parties without nuclear installations to play a full part in the review process;
- to streamline the review process by avoiding duplication of discussion of the same information on, for example, the regulatory system, in any one report;
- to save resources by
  - enabling national assessors to focus in detail on a limited number of reports from their own group members (although they may study other reports to whatever depth they wish) and
  - minimizing the number of experts any Contracting Party has to include in its delegation for a review meeting; and
- to provide for the efficient conduct of business at, and minimize the overall length of, the review meeting.

### III. INITIAL COMPOSITION OF COUNTRY GROUPS

At the preparatory meeting held, in accordance with Article 21 of the Convention, within six months of the Convention's entry into force, decisions will be taken on the mechanism for establishing each country group for the first review meeting. Not later than six and a half months before the review meeting, an organizational meeting will be held to allocate Contracting Parties to country groups using the method previously agreed, to select group co-ordinators and to elect Rapporteurs. Such persons should be chosen on the basis of, *inter alia*, expertise, impartiality and availability. Each group co-ordinator will act as a focal point for questions and comments on national reports before the review meeting. Contracting Parties will be notified of the allocation results and the names of the group co-ordinators by the Secretariat.

Country groups should not be limited to particular geographical areas. In order to achieve sufficient breadth of experience to promote both effective and efficient discussion, each group should contain at least four Contracting Parties with operational nuclear installations. Tables 2 and 3 show a suggested means of allocating Contracting Parties with nuclear installations to country groups on the basis of the ranking established in Rule 17.1 of the Rules of Procedure. The Contracting Parties favour the creation of a small number of groups as shown in Table 2 so that each group would include Contracting Parties with nuclear programmes of different sizes; the groups would include up to seven or eight Contracting Parties with nuclear installations and five Contracting Parties without nuclear installations.

The inter-group distribution of Contracting Parties without nuclear installations will be agreed by the Contracting Parties at the organizational meeting on an alphabetical basis, starting with a randomly selected letter and then use of the first letter of each Contracting Party's name, spelt in the English language.

#### **IV. ASSIGNMENT TO COUNTRY GROUPS OF STATES RATIFYING AFTER AN ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING**

States which ratify the Convention after an organizational meeting but at least 90 days before the review meeting should be enabled to join in the review process. Such Contracting Parties are required to submit as soon as possible, and in any event not later than 90 days before the review meeting, a national report pursuant to Article 5 and are entitled to receive the national reports of others. They should be added to existing country groups in sequential order of date of ratification, starting with the group with the fewest members (as shown in Table 2) or, if all the groups have the same number of members, starting with Group 1.

Pursuant to the terms of Article 31.2 of the Convention, States which ratify later than 90 days before the date fixed for a review meeting will not become Contracting Parties until after that review meeting has begun. They will therefore not have the rights of Contracting Parties and will not be able to attend that review meeting. If they produce a national report, it will not be considered at that meeting.

#### **V. PARTICIPATION IN COUNTRY GROUPS**

As provided for in Article 20.3 of the Convention, each Contracting Party shall have a reasonable opportunity to discuss the reports of all other Contracting Parties. In the period up to two months before a review meeting, all Contracting Parties may submit written questions and comments on individual national reports to the country group co-ordinators, Rapporteurs and Contracting Parties concerned. These questions and comments will be distributed to all Contracting Parties (see Section VIII).

In order to ensure the efficient and effective review of national reports, access to the sessions of a country group at a review meeting will be open to:

- (a) the members of that country group as full participants, and
- (b) representatives of Contracting Parties which have been allocated to other country groups and which have, in accordance with the time chart in Table 1, previously submitted to the group co-ordinator substantive written questions or comments on the national report of a Contracting Party allocated to that country group, such representatives having the right to be present throughout the country group's discussions on that national report.

Review in each country group will begin with a short presentation by the particular Contracting Party whose report is to be reviewed. This Contracting Party will then respond to the substantive written questions and comments submitted to it or to the country group co-ordinator, whether by other members of that country group or by other interested Contracting Parties.

There will then be a discussion period on the report and on all the questions and comments that have been submitted. The members of the country group will begin discussions on each group of issues. In the context of these discussions, other Contracting Parties which have demonstrated an interest in the issues may then discuss and seek further clarification of responses to their specific written questions and comments.

Finally, the country group members and Chairperson will discuss and agree on the content of the report to be presented at a plenary session of the review meeting by the country group's Rapporteur.

## **VI. COMPOSITION OF COUNTRY GROUPS AT SUCCESSIVE MEETINGS**

If it is decided to maintain the 'vertical' approach at successive review meetings, it would be desirable to vary the membership of the country groups at such successive meetings. Such periodical changes in group membership would enable Contracting Parties to acquire in-depth knowledge of a wide range of different approaches to regulation, design, siting and operation and of problems and associated solutions. Over time, this could contribute to an increasingly constructive review process. Such changes in group membership will occur from one review meeting to the next through the reordering of Contracting Parties in Table 3 that will occur as nuclear installations move from the "Installations planned" to the "Installations operating" column or from the "Installations operating" to the "Installations closed" column. The addition of new Contracting Parties to Table 3 will also change the grouping. At the same time, continuity will be provided after each change by a core of previous group members.

## **VII. ACTIVITIES OF EACH CONTRACTING PARTY AS A MEMBER OF A COUNTRY GROUP**

Each Contracting Party, as a member of a country group, will:

- (a) together with other members of the same group, elect a Rapporteur for the group at the organizational meeting;
- (b) read and consider all national reports and, in particular, study in detail the national reports of all other members of its group;
- (c) alert other Contracting Parties, both directly and through the relevant group co-ordinator, to any questions and comments arising from its review of the national reports;
- (d) receive from each group co-ordinator, including its own, a compilation of the questions and comments submitted on each national report, so that before the review meeting each Contracting Party will be aware of all the issues raised on each national report; and
- (e) during group meetings, consider and discuss in depth the national report of each member of the group, giving consideration as appropriate for up to one full day to national reports of Contracting Parties with nuclear installations and for less time to reports of Contracting Parties without nuclear installations.

## **VIII. DOCUMENTATION AND THE ROLE OF THE GROUP CO-ORDINATORS**

Subject to Section IV, at the latest six months before the review meeting, each Contracting Party shall submit its national report pursuant to Article 5 of the Convention both to the co-ordinator of the country group to which it has been assigned and to the Secretariat of the review meeting for circulation to all Contracting Parties and Rapporteurs.

A time limit of two months before the review meeting is set for the receipt of questions and comments by the Contracting Parties concerned and by the relevant group co-ordinator. After that time, the group co-ordinator will pass on to each group member a compilation of the questions raised and comments made on each national report by members of the group and by other Contracting Parties wishing to comment in writing at this stage. The co-ordinator will also pass this compilation to the Rapporteur of the group and to the other group co-ordinators, who will distribute it to their group members.

## **IX. LENGTH OF REVIEW MEETINGS**

The aim should be to minimize length while retaining effectiveness of the process and minimizing costs. A maximum of three weeks is suggested for the first review meeting. The subsequent review meetings could be shorter as it may not be necessary to review all areas to the same depth as at the first review meeting.

## **X. CONDUCT OF REVIEW MEETINGS AND THE ROLE OF THE RAPPORTEURS**

### **A. Opening session**

At a short, plenary opening session, procedural matters will be addressed and national statements will be accepted in writing only. Before country group discussions begin, the Rapporteurs of the country groups will meet to finalize a consistent approach to the detailed review process, taking account of any trends in the questions and comments of Contracting Parties on national reports already received. They should also decide upon the approach to reporting the groups' findings at the main plenary session.

### **B. Country group sessions**

Following the Rapporteurs' meeting, the Contracting Parties will split into country groups for the purpose of reviewing in depth the reports of others in the same group and resolving the issues raised in writing by any Contracting Party. It is envisaged that such country group sessions will occupy the remainder of the first week and part of the second week. Each country group should review its members' national reports in a consistent and objective manner as a basis for assessing safety.

### **C. Final plenary session**

At the final plenary session of the review meeting,

- for each Contracting Party in turn, the relevant group Rapporteur will make an oral report. To ensure consistency, the structure of these oral reports will be agreed at the Rapporteurs' meeting. Each oral report should take account of all the views expressed by members of the relevant group on the national reports in question, should include points of agreement and disagreement, should identify good practices as well as highlighting any areas of concern and should spell out the main themes/topics identified for discussion at the final plenary session;
- each Contracting Party will have an opportunity to respond to the comments made on its national report; and
- there will be an opportunity for other Contracting Parties to comment on national reports and on the Rapporteurs' oral reports.

## **XI. SUMMARY REPORTS**

The President, together with the Rapporteurs, should prepare a summary report and submit it at a plenary session for adoption by consensus by the Contracting Parties for publication at the end of the review meeting, as provided in Article 25 of the Convention. The summary report should be concise and clear. It should summarize major issues, possibly by combining significant points made in the Rapporteurs' oral reports on the country group discussions. It would not identify any particular Contracting Party by name, but point out any significant areas of concern and interest, highlight good practices and make recommendations for the future.

TIME CHART

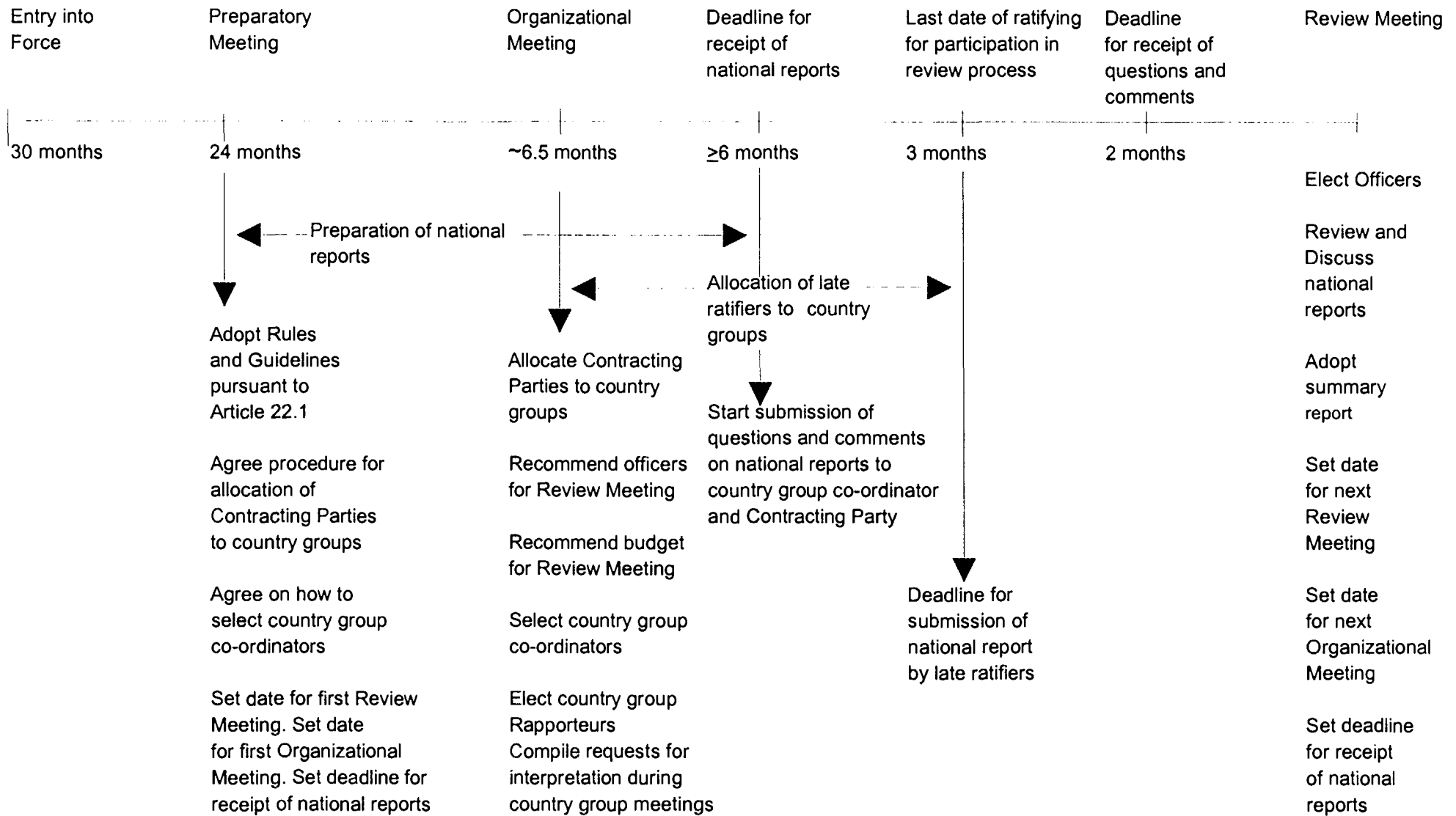




TABLE 2: A possible way of forming Country Groups - Example with five Country Groups

Note:

1. The table is shown for illustration purposes only, reflecting the situation at the time of the Preparatory Meeting. The actual allocation of Contracting Parties to Country Groups would be made at each Organizational Meeting.
2. Table 3 lists Signatory States which have Nuclear Installations, ranked by number of installations and pursuant to the principles set forth in Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules.
3. Table 2 illustrates one possible, simple approach to forming Country Groups from these Signatory States with Nuclear Installations, based on the ranking list in Table 3 and distributed by the "tennis seeding" method. Countries without Nuclear Installations would be randomly allocated to groups, according to the principles set forth in Rule 17 of the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules.
4. The list includes all Signatory States in the expectation that all will ratify and become Contracting Parties before the first Organizational Meeting.

GROUP							
	1	10	11	20	21	30	31
1	USA	Korea, Rep.of	India	China	Argentina	Kazakhstan	Slovenia
	2	9	12	19	22	29	32
2	France	Sweden	Spain	Hungary	Lithuania	Romania	Italy
	3	8	13	18	23	28	33
3	Japan	Ukraine	Belgium	Finland	Mexico	Pakistan	Iran, Islamic Republic of
	4	7	14	17	24	27	
4	UK	Germany	Bulgaria	Czech Republic	Netherlands	Brazil	
	5	6	15	16	25	26	
5	Russian Federation	Canada	Switzerland	Slovak Republic	South Africa	Armenia	

TABLE 3: Example of ranking of Signatory States by the number of Nuclear Installations and pursuant to the principles set forth in Rule 17 in the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules.

Note: This table is for illustration purposes only, reflecting the situation at the time of the Preparatory Meeting. The actual listing would be established at each Organizational Meeting, based on data provided by the Contracting Parties, describing the situation at the time of the Organizational Meeting. Referring to the full text in Article 2(i) of the Convention, a Nuclear Installation as defined there is synonymous with one land-based civil nuclear power reactor.

Number <sup>1</sup>	Country	Installations operating	Installations closed <sup>2</sup>	Installations planned <sup>3</sup>	Total Installations
1	United States of America	110	16	0	126
2	France	57	10	3	70
3	Japan	53	1	2	56
4	United Kingdom	35	10	0	45
5	Russian Federation	29	4	4	37
6	Canada	21	4	0	25
7	Germany	20	16	0	36
8	Ukraine	16	1	4	21
9	Sweden	12	1	0	13
10	Korea, Republic of	11	0	5	16
11	India	10	0	4	14
12	Spain	9	1	0	10
13	Belgium	7	1	0	8
14	Bulgaria	6	0	0	6
15	Switzerland	5	0	0	5
16	Slovak Republic	4	1	4	9
17	Czech Republic	4	0	2	6
18	Finland	4	0	0	4
19	Hungary	4	0	0	4
20	China	3	0	2	5
21	Argentina	2	0	1	3
22	Lithuania	2	0	0	2
23	Mexico	2	0	0	2
24	Netherlands	2	0	0	2

Number <sup>1</sup>	Country	Installations operating	Installations closed <sup>2</sup>	Installations planned <sup>3</sup>	Total Installations
25	South Africa	2	0	0	2
26	Armenia	1	1	0	2
27	Brazil	1	0	1	2
28	Pakistan	1	0	1	2
29	Romania	1	0	1	2
30	Kazakhstan	1	0	0	1
31	Slovenia	1	0	0	1
32	Italy	0	4	0	4
33	Iran, Islamic Republic of	0	0	2	2

1. Countries are listed in descending order of nuclear installations operating. Where numbers are the same, listing is alphabetical. For #32-33, countries are listed in descending order of nuclear installations closed, then nuclear installations planned or under construction.

2. Some of these figures include some nuclear installations being decommissioned, which do not fall within the scope of the Convention. However, their inclusion makes no difference to the ranking order.

3. Nuclear installations planned and/or under construction.  
(Secretariat Note: column currently includes only nuclear installations under construction).