



International Conference on
**Nuclear Security:
Global Directions
for the Future**

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Scientific Matters

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Conference web page

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BACKGROUND

The terrorist attacks in 2001 in the USA and other serious events, both before and after, have alerted the international community to strengthening its efforts to protect nuclear and other radioactive materials from being used in malicious acts. A wide range of measures have been taken to prevent nuclear or other radioactive material falling into the hands of criminals and sub-State actors attempting to cause nuclear terror. Since the potential consequences of any malicious use could be catastrophic and could jeopardize the continued peaceful uses of nuclear technology and applications, strong actions are warranted by the international community.

The IAEA Board of Governors approved, in March 2002, a three year Plan of Activities to protect against nuclear terrorism. Through the plan, the IAEA assists States in strengthening the physical security of nuclear and other radioactive material, improving accountancy of these materials, addressing the detection of theft and illicit trafficking in these materials, and should they occur, responding to such acts through better planning and preparedness. In parallel, the plan supports the development of a comprehensive and coordinated global nuclear security framework.

As a result of these efforts, there is substantial progress in developing, implementing and maintaining effective nuclear security regimes. Similarly, there is experience in providing assistance to countries that lack the resources and personnel to install or upgrade their own nuclear security systems.

It is now the time to review the present status, examine all the experience gathered so far, and consider what can be learned from it to shape policy and guide future actions.

TOPICS

The conference will provide an opportunity to consider:

- The nature of the threat of malicious acts involving nuclear and other radioactive materials and their associated facilities.
- The experience, achievements and shortcomings relevant to the international efforts to strengthen the prevention and detection of, and the response to, malicious acts involving nuclear and other radioactive materials in use, storage and transport, and their associated facilities.
- The global directions for the future for the IAEA and its nuclear security programme, including how this programme can best interact with Member States and other international organizations with relevant responsibilities.
- Cross-fertilization and synergies between the IAEA's activities and other related initiatives.

OBJECTIVES

The conference aims at fostering a better understanding and awareness of nuclear security changes since 11 September 2001 and threats that would involve the malicious use of nuclear or other radioactive materials. It will include ways in which assistance and support to countries without the necessary resources can be more effectively provided and sustained. It will examine what has been achieved and how effective existing measures have been. It will consider what should be continued and how the international response might be altered to provide a more comprehensive and coherent approach. It will seek new ideas and foster cross-fertilization amongst States and international agencies to facilitate better and more deliberate planning. It will look at what is sustainable in the long term. In short, it will provide an opportunity to share information on how to most successfully combat sub-State and criminal threats now and in the future.

AUDIENCE

The conference will provide a contribution to international and national policy development. It is directed at ministers, senior policy makers, government officials and technical experts in nuclear security. Participation in the conference will be limited in order to facilitate in-depth discussion.

