

## **SECOND DRAFT**

### **International Experts Meeting “Radiation Protection after the Fukushima Daiichi Accident: Promoting Confidence and Understanding”**

#### **INTRODUCTORY REMARKS**

**Pil-Soo Hahn, Director, Division of Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety (NSRW)**

On behalf of the Division of Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety it is my great pleasure to welcome you all to Vienna for this most important International Experts Meeting “Radiation Protection after the Fukushima Daiichi Accident: Promoting Confidence and Understanding”. The meeting has been organized by the Agency’s Division of Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety to provide an opportunity for our Member States to discuss the various radiation protection issues, with a focus on protection of the public, that have been highlighted by the Fukushima accident and to consider how these should be addressed at both the national and international levels.

While in the immediate aftermath of the Fukushima accident the initial focus was on the safety of the damaged reactors and of the spent fuel storage ponds, the medium and longer term issues related to recovery quickly came into focus. Often referred to as a “return to normality”, we need to recognize that for the many people that were directly affected by the Fukushima accident, their lives may never be the same as they were before the accident.

The prime interest of those affected by the accident is to be assured of their own safety and that of their families. It is therefore understandable that the local and national authorities in Japan, while applying national standards, are also looking at those that are internationally adopted. Furthermore, the authorities have the added responsibility of ensuring that the budget allocated to these activities is spent both wisely and effectively. Decisions on optimization need to balance the outcome of cost-benefit analysis with societal considerations, something that is never easy and requires sound judgement based on strong ethics.

Some of the challenges being faced include the remediation of contaminated land; the management of the large amounts of waste that will be created as a consequence; the return of evacuees to their homes; maintaining the natural balance in sensitive ecosystems such as forests, which represent a significant percentage of the surface area of the Fukushima Prefecture; and ensuring the continued safety of the foodchain. Overlaying all of this is the need for strong communication and co-operation between the authorities and the effected populations so that effective decision-making is seen as a shared responsibility.

I think it is appropriate to remind you of what is stated in this regard in the International Basic Safety Standards, namely **“the persons or organizations responsible for the planning, implementation and verification of remedial actions shall, as appropriate, ensure that ..... a mechanism for public information is in place and the.....parties affected.....are involved in the planning, implementation and verification of the remedial actions, including any monitoring and surveillance following remediation”**.

Within the Division of Radiation, Transport and Waste Safety we have developed considerable knowledge and experience in strategies to address remediation and waste management issues, whether they be as a result of current practices, past practices or nuclear accidents. Presently the Division is working with Fukushima Prefecture to provide advice in relation to the remediation of contaminated land, including the management strategies for rivers, lakes and forests; the management of radioactive waste, including incineration options; and the use of radiation monitoring data as a public information tool. This work commenced in early 2013 and will run initially for a period of three years.

Returning to our work this week, the International Experts Meeting will focus on four key issues, namely

- (1) Identifying the key radiation protection issues to be addressed by the international community;
- (2) Enhancing long term strategies in response to nuclear or radiological accidents;
- (3) Assisting Member States in reviewing and updating their radiation protection programmes, as appropriate; and
- (4) Supporting the IAEA's work in the area of radiation protection.

I look forward to a very interesting week of discussions I urge you all to take an active part in the meeting so that maximum benefit can be gained.

I now pass you back to the Chairman of the meeting, Mr Sigurdur Magnusson.