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Translated from Arabic

Republic of Iraq

Working paper

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Because Iraq is aware of the importance of nuclear safety in protecting the environment and the public, its ministries and government bodies have been working on the establishment of appropriate instructions for handling of ionizing radiation sources. Iraq has large numbers of such sources, some solid-state and some liquid, and spent radiation sources that need to be processed, disposed of and buried permanently in line with international standards. There are also some sites where nuclear activities were conducted in the past which are being dismantled and cleaned up under a cooperation programme with the IAEA. This will generate radioactive waste that will need to be processed and buried. A radioactive waste management and processing centre has been established and efforts are being made to identify sites for controlled burial of solid and liquid waste in Iraq in accordance with the IAEA international standards.

The following actions have been taken to enhance Iraq's status in the field of nuclear safety.

1. National Disaster Centre

The Iraqi Government has put in place a high-level committee for disaster management, including all the relevant ministries and bodies, with a view to managing and eliminating the effects of various types of disasters that could occur in the country such as flooding, earthquakes, epidemics, radiation, etc.

2. Radiation and Nuclear Emergency Plan

The Iraqi Government has put in place a commission to develop a draft radiation and nuclear emergency plan, with the participation of ministries and government bodies and organizations from the civil community, based on IAEA guidance and principles. This plan includes basic principles for planning, emergency preparedness and response operations, and various annexes on the capabilities of the stakeholders.

3. National Data Centre

In line with the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, of which Iraq is a signatory State, a National Data Centre has been established under the auspices of the national regulatory department. The centre aims at compiling and analysing information through the international information centre of the CTBTO in order to assess accidents and to determine their consequences.

4. The Iraqi Ministry of the Environment manages a radiation monitoring station network in Iraq for early detection of radioactive pollution and the Ministry is working on expanding this network to cover all regions of the country.

5. Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident

The Iraqi Government signed the Early Notification Convention in 1988, under which signatory States are provided with the available information needed to minimize radioactive impact. The Convention helps State parties update their radiation safety plans.

6. Proposals On Nuclear Safety

Based on the assessment of accidents that have occurred in the last two decades, we propose the following:

- 1- Additional preventive action should be considered to protect nuclear installations (nuclear power plants) that are close to coastal areas from tsunamis by erecting concrete walls around operating reactors;
- 2- There is a need to update national radiation and nuclear emergency plans to deal with accidents and mitigate their impact;
- 3- There is a need to enhance international and regional cooperation in the field of radiation and nuclear emergencies via information exchange through warning networks and radiation and nuclear monitoring networks;
- 4- Persons involved in nuclear safety and security issues need to be trained to enhance their competencies;
- 5- The various monitoring centres need to be developed in terms of equipment and skilled human resources, in order to enhance their capacity to predict natural phenomena so that appropriate action can be taken.