

# **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF RADIOACTIVE SOURCES: TOWARDS A GLOBAL SYSTEM FOR THE CONTINUOUS CONTROL OF SOURCES THROUGHOUT THEIR LIFE CYCLE**

## **FINDINGS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE CONFERENCE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The need for safety and security measures to support the peaceful uses of radioactive sources in social and economic development has been recognized for many years. These issues were addressed at several previous international conferences organized by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) — the International Conference on the Safety of Radiation Sources and the Security of Radioactive Materials held in Dijon in 1998, the International Conference of National Regulatory Authorities with competence in the Safety of Radiation Sources and the Security of Radioactive Material held in Buenos Aires in 2000 and the International Conference on Security of Radioactive Sources, held in Vienna in 2003. They were also addressed at the International Conference on National Infrastructures for Radiation Safety held in Rabat in 2003 and the International Conference on Nuclear Security held in London in 2005.

These conferences took place, first, as a result of the growing realization that inadequately controlled radioactive sources have led to radiological accidents, some causing serious injuries, deaths, and severe economic disruption in a number of countries throughout the world, and second, as a result of recent terrorist attacks and the growing realization that such sources might be used for malicious purposes.

The Vienna conference concluded that the IAEA should organize a further conference in two years' time. Subsequently, a follow-up conference on the safety and security of radioactive sources was announced at the G-8 Evian Summit held under the French Presidency.

The Bordeaux Conference was hosted by the Government of France and organized by the IAEA in cooperation with the European Commission, the European Police Office (Europol), the International Criminal Police Organization (Interpol), the International Commission on Radiological Protection (ICRP), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Radiation Protection Association (IRPA), the World Customs Organization (WCO), and the World Health Organization (WHO) and under the auspices of the G-8. It was attended by about 300 participants from 64 IAEA Member States.

### **THE CODE OF CONDUCT ON THE SAFETY AND SECURITY OF RADIOACTIVE SOURCES**

The Conference acknowledged that the completion and subsequent endorsement of the Code of Conduct on the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources represented a major achievement since the Vienna conference and recognized the IAEA Categorization of Radioactive Sources as the foundation of the Code and the central role of the Categorization in the Code's harmonized implementation.

The Conference recognized the global support for the Code. To date, 72 States have expressed their political commitment to working towards implementing the guidance contained in the Code.

The Conference encouraged all Member States to continue to work towards implementing the guidance contained in the Code, and to make a political commitment to the Code if they have not already done so.

The Conference focused on Member States' progress towards implementation of the Code and recognized that the degree of Member State implementation of the Code necessarily varied widely. For countries in the earliest stages of establishing a national regulatory system, bilateral, regional and multilateral support, including the creation of networks, is recommended, in addition to the assistance provided by the IAEA. However, even countries with well established regulatory infrastructures indicated that work remains to be done to fully implement the Code.

The Conference recognized that safety and security are an integral part of effective and comprehensive regulatory infrastructures for ensuring the continuous control of radioactive sources throughout their life cycle. All organizations, both national and international, with competence and responsibilities related to the continuous control of radioactive source were encouraged to cooperate effectively in enhancing the control of sources.

The Conference recognized that an adequate balance between confidentiality and information exchange must be struck to ensure the safety and security of radioactive sources.

The Conference asked the IAEA to continue its work of promoting the Code and supporting global efforts to implement the Code.

The Conference recognized the value of the presentation and discussion of 24 national working papers from Member States representing all regions of the world and encouraged the IAEA to undertake consultations with Member States with a view to establishing a formalized process for a periodic exchange of information and lessons learned and evaluation of progress made by Member States towards implementing the provisions of the Code.

The Conference discussed the issues associated with moving the Code towards a legally binding undertaking. A number of participants were in favour of making such a move in the near future. Other participants preferred that priority be given to implementation of the Code before considering such a step.

## IMPORT AND EXPORT CONTROLS

The Conference welcomed the Guidance on the Import and Export of Radioactive Sources as another important step towards a global system for the continuous control of radioactive sources throughout their life cycle.

The Conference acknowledged the challenges inherent in implementing the Guidance as a necessarily multilateral endeavour and stressed the importance of its implementation in a cooperative and harmonized fashion.

The Conference recalled that the IAEA General Conference had in 2004 noted that more than 30 countries had made clear their intention to work towards effective import and export controls by 31 December 2005, and that the General Conference had encouraged States to act in accordance with the Guidance on a harmonized basis and to notify the IAEA Director General of their intention to do so. The Conference noted that so far only three Member States had notified the Director General, and it urged all Member States to write to the Director General as requested by the General Conference and re-emphasized the importance of implementing the Guidance on a global, harmonized basis.

The Conference noted the value of exchanging information on national implementation of the Guidance, which further highlighted the desirability of a formalized review process.

#### DEALING WITH THE LEGACY OF PAST ACTIVITIES

The Conference noted the substantial efforts undertaken in many countries to establish national strategies for regaining and maintaining control of vulnerable and orphan sources.

The Conference also noted the success of a number of multilateral efforts to strengthen controls for radioactive sources and the legacy of past activities. Such initiatives include the Tripartite Agreement between the US, Russia and the IAEA, which focuses on the strengthening of controls for sources in countries of the former Soviet Union, and programmes initiated with the support of the EU. New initiatives such as the Global Threat Reduction Initiative, the G-8 Global Partnership, and the cooperative arrangements in South East Asia are expected to strengthen controls in many more countries throughout the world. The Conference stressed the need for harmonization and for the avoidance of duplication of effort in these activities.

The Conference encouraged Member States with limited resources and experience to take advantage of existing and future assistance programmes for regaining and maintaining control of vulnerable and orphan sources.

The Conference recognized the financial burden associated with the regaining of control of radioactive sources and encouraged the IAEA to collect and disseminate information on national approaches to this issue.

The Conference encouraged the IAEA to continue providing assistance to Member States in regaining and strengthening control over vulnerable and orphan sources by implementing regional projects in cooperation with regional partner States.

#### SUSTAINABILITY AND CONTINUITY OF CONTROL

The Conference encouraged Member States to strengthen, as necessary, their regulatory infrastructures so as to ensure the sustainability of the control of radioactive sources. It urged the IAEA to continue providing support for the efforts of Member States to strengthen their regulatory infrastructures.

The Conference encouraged the IAEA to keep under review its safety standards and to develop security guidance documents relevant to radioactive sources in order to support Member States in strengthening their national regulatory infrastructures and, where necessary, to develop further guidance of this nature.

Recognizing that the IAEA Basic Safety Standards (BSS) were published prior to the Code, the Conference encouraged the IAEA to take account of the Code and of feedback from its implementation in the planned revision of the BSS.

The Conference recognized the effectiveness of the IAEA's Model Project on the Upgrading of National Radiation Protection Infrastructures, which had helped to establish and strengthen radiation control infrastructures in more than 90 countries. The Conference looks forward to implementation of the recently established IAEA policy on promoting effective and sustainable national regulatory infrastructures for the control of radiation sources, which explicitly includes implementation of the guidance in the Code of Conduct and the promotion of networking.

The Conference recognized the role of Radiation Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources Infrastructure Appraisal (RaSSIA) missions and related self-assessments and of the Regulatory Authority Information System (RAIS) for establishing national registries of sources and for promoting sustainable systems for the control of radioactive sources. It also recognized the role of the International Catalogue of Sealed Radioactive Sources and Devices.

The Conference recognized the role of source manufacturers in designing inherently safer sources and in providing lifetime support to users, especially at end of the source life cycle. Manufacturers will also have an important role to play in the systems required by the Code for ensuring that radioactive sources are identifiable and traceable. In this regard, the Conference noted that the latest binding EU legislation on high activity sources provides for such identifiability and traceability.

The Conference welcomed the establishment of the International Source Suppliers and Producers Association (ISSPA) and its intention to contribute to the safety and security of radioactive sources as expressed in its mission statement and draft Code of Good Practice.

The Conference recognized the importance of recycling radioactive sources to the extent possible, but acknowledged that appropriate disposal options must be available as an integral part of a complete radioactive source management system.

The Conference noted that, while waste management is primarily a national issue, regional cooperation in dealing with disused radioactive sources should be considered.

The Conference recognized the need for strengthening the inherent safety and security of radioactive sources and the potential value of alternative technologies using ionizing radiation and of less dispersible materials. In this regard, the Conference proposed that the IAEA explore appropriate options.

#### ILLICIT TRAFFICKING AND INADVERTENT MOVEMENTS

The Conference recognized the continuing need for international efforts to prevent illicit trafficking in and inadvertent movements of radioactive sources and recognized the need to further upgrade detection capabilities and to take appropriate enforcement actions.

The Conference encouraged the further development and strengthening of capacity building measures to help States detect, interdict and respond to illicit trafficking.

The Conference encouraged the development and deployment of effective and sustainable technologies for detecting radioactive sources at borders and elsewhere. The Conference called for enhanced cooperation in preventing, detecting and responding to illicit trafficking and inadvertent movements and for interaction between States and international organizations.

The Conference encouraged continued support for the IAEA Illicit Trafficking Data Base and urged that the quality of the data be improved and the level of analysis be upgraded.

#### EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Conference noted that the effective management of radiological emergencies involving radioactive sources needs to be an integral part of national strategies for the safety and security of radioactive sources. In particular, it is fundamental that first responders to an emergency have appropriate training in dealing with ionizing radiation. In this regard, the Conference suggested that the IAEA facilitate exchanges of information between first responder organizations in different countries.

#### OUTLOOK

The Conference recommended that the IAEA, taking account of these findings, revisit the *Action Plan for the Safety and Security of Radioactive Sources*. Governments and other relevant international organizations were encouraged to review these findings and to take them into account in defining their own particular actions.

In view of the importance of the topic, the Conference recommended that the IAEA organize a further conference in about three years' time to assess the progress in moving towards a global system for the continuous control of radioactive sources throughout their life cycle, taking into account the proposal for a formalized process of information exchange made by the Conference.