

Chairman's Closing Summary

I believe we have had a successful workshop. This is the third annual workshop in which I have participated. Our mutual understanding of the issues is not perfect. The guidance developed and provided is not perfect.

However, your understanding of the difficult task of developing a success programme for the peaceful application of nuclear energy has, in my mind, greatly increased over the past 2-3 years and our understanding of your difficulties and concerns has also greatly increased.

We wish we could tell you exactly how to proceed to develop your program, exactly how many people you need on the NEPIO, and exactly how much it will cost. But the reality is that you know more about the political and economic challenges you face than we do. So you must take ownership of your own destiny.

However, I can tell you that, from what I see, the IAEA, the developed countries and the technology holders do sincerely wish to help you.

Let me make some comments on the specific topics of this workshop. First the NEPIO. As I said in my opening comments, NEPIO is a concept. It needn't be called a NEPIO or be organized by any stringent guidance. As you have seen from the presentations of Member States on their present efforts and from the case studies of the very successful programs of South Korea, Finland and Japan, the guiding organizations are or were not called "NEPIO". Nor were they organized exactly as described in the current Agency guidance. But they all had in common the objective of addressing the issues necessary to create a successful domestic nuclear energy program. It is striking that the historical development of the programs of South Korea and Finland can be described within the context of what we are now calling NEPIO.

So call the NEPIO what you will and organize it as you feel appropriate. But focus on the issues it must address within the context of your particular situation.

With respect to the Evaluation process and criteria, you have expressed a desire for additional help in how to conduct a self-assessment and the criteria for determining whether "significant actions", "minor actions" or "no actions" are necessary.

This information may be best obtained by the presentations of case studies in a future workshop rather than by a new guidance document.

I am somewhat troubled by the feeling that these evaluations or assessments are just a test you must pass. While in some way that may be true, especially for Milestone 2 in reality, these evaluations or assessments are one of the most valuable mechanisms by which you may be guided to develop a most successful program.

In my closing remarks at last year's workshop, I expressed the thought that a rigorous self assessment process was almost counter to human nature.

To paraphrase the comments of one of our colleagues at this meeting: We are all proud and happy to discuss our good practices, we are equally reluctant to admit our own shortcomings.

Yet the ability to face these shortcomings and deal with them is the path to a truly excellent organization and a sign of an enlightened management. This is a lesson that the nuclear industry has discovered that many other businesses are just beginning to learn.

So I would encourage you to view these evaluations or assessments as opportunities to improve, not as obstacles to overcome.

It has been my honour and pleasure to serve as chairman of your workshop. I hope that I may continue to have the opportunity to interact with you as you proceed with the difficult task of bringing the benefits of the peaceful applications of nuclear energy to your countries and your people. Thank you.