



CONVENTION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY (CNS)

**Introduction to the CNS and Its Associated
Rules of Procedure and Guidelines:
Technical Booklet**



CNS Booklet 2024

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Convention on Nuclear Safety [0] (hereinafter referred to as “the Convention” or “CNS”) was adopted in Vienna on 17 June 1994 and entered into force on 24 October 1996. The objectives of the Convention are: to achieve and maintain a high level of nuclear safety worldwide; to establish and maintain effective defences in nuclear installations against potential radiological hazards in order to protect individuals, society and the environment from harmful effects of ionizing radiation from such installations; and to prevent accidents with radiological consequences and to mitigate such consequences should they occur.

The Convention was drawn up in the aftermath of the Three Mile Island and Chernobyl accidents at a series of expert-level meetings from 1992 to 1994, and was the result of considerable work by States, including their national regulatory and nuclear safety authorities, and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The obligations of the Contracting Parties are based to a large extent on the application of the fundamental safety principles for nuclear installations contained in an IAEA 1993 publication, “The Safety of Nuclear Installations”. These obligations cover, *inter alia*: the legislative and regulatory framework; the regulatory body; responsibility of the licence holder; the availability of adequate financial and human resources; the assessment and verification of safety; quality assurance; emergency preparedness; and technical safety obligations related to siting, design, construction and operation of nuclear installations.

The Contracting Parties are required to submit reports on the implementation of their obligations under the Convention for peer review at periodic meetings. The process of presenting the National Report at the Review Meeting and answering questions from the other Contracting Parties is a tool to help the Contracting Parties to achieve a high level of safety in their civil nuclear programmes and to promote a high level of nuclear safety worldwide.

This peer review process is an important and dynamic the main innovative and dynamic element of the Convention.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

SCOPE

The Convention applies to the safety of nuclear installations, defined as “any land-based civil nuclear power plant under a Contracting Party’s jurisdiction, including such storage, handling and treatment facilities for radioactive materials as are on the same site and are directly related to the operation of the nuclear power plant” (Art. 2 and 3).

CONTRACTING PARTY

Any sovereign State may become a Contracting Party to the Convention (Art. 30); membership of the IAEA is not mandatory for this purpose.

In addition, a regional organization of an integration or other nature may become a Contracting Party, provided that it is constituted by sovereign States and has competence in respect of the negotiation, conclusion and application of international agreements in matters covered by this Convention. Such an organization shall not hold any vote additional to the votes of its Member States.

STATUS

As of April 2024, there were 95 Contracting Parties to the CNS. Six Signatory States have not yet ratified the Convention. The latest status is available on the IAEA CNS public webpage - <https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-safety-conventions/convention-nuclear-safety>

PROMOTION OF THE CONVENTION AND EFFECTIVE PARTICIPATION OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

With each new Contracting Party, the Convention gains strength and can better serve as a means of ensuring nuclear safety worldwide.

The IAEA General Conference in its resolution [0] repeatedly urges all Member States that have not yet done so, especially those planning, constructing, commissioning or operating nuclear power plants (NPPs), or considering a nuclear power programme, to consider becoming Contracting Parties to the CNS.

Also, the 6th CNS Review Meeting in 2014 reminded the Contracting Parties of their obligations under the Convention to attend and fully participate in the Review Meeting. The Meeting called on all Contracting Parties to commit themselves to the effective implementation of the Convention review process, underlining that full participation in the review process of this international legal instrument benefits all Contracting Parties.

At the 7th CNS Review Meeting in 2017, the Contracting Parties requested the IAEA to consider organizing educational workshops for non-NPP and other interested countries to provide information on the process of joining and the obligations under the CNS, including participation in the Review Meetings.

Since then, from 2019 to 2024, the Agency has held several educational workshops on the CNS, as well as three workshops for Permanent Mission Representatives, in 2020, 2022 and 2024. At all workshops, special attention has been paid to the important developments in the CNS peer review process after the Fukushima Daiichi accident, including the implementation of the principles of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety.

BENEFITS OF ADHERING TO THE CONVENTION

The Convention benefits Contracting Parties by:

- Fostering the importance of safety of nuclear power plants and the sharing of expertise in this area. In this regard, the peer review process:
 - provides a unique overview of the assessment of nuclear safety worldwide;
 - encourages continuing improvement in nuclear safety;
 - fosters identification of globally acknowledged Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance, Challenges, trends and issues;
 - provides a forum for sharing experience and for international co-operation among regulators;
 - improves transparency and openness about nuclear safety through the publication of National Reports by individual Contracting Parties; and
 - allows for collective ‘learning by experience’.
- Assuring the public that national arrangements for the safety of nuclear power plants conform to international standards. In this regard, the peer review process:

- provides a peer review of each Contracting Party's (CP) national nuclear safety programme in a challenging, but constructive, atmosphere;
- provides a structure and time-bound process for a national self- assessment;
- provides an external acknowledgment of Good Practices and Areas of Good Performance;
- encourages early identification of Challenges and provides ideas on how to address them based on CPs' experiences;
- provides access to a wealth of experience on nuclear safety issues worldwide (particularly helpful for countries just embarking on a nuclear programme).

In light of all the above benefits, the review process creates a unique opportunity for experience sharing and collective learning, which is beneficial to the Contracting Parties planning to embark on a nuclear power programme, as well as those with mature programmes. These countries will be able to identify and learn from other Contracting Parties' Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance and Challenges.

The Guidelines regarding National Reports under the Convention on Nuclear Safety [0] contain a specific Section II. E dedicated to offering guidance to the Contracting Parties without nuclear installations. In particular, paragraph 28 of this Section aims at guiding those Contracting Parties without nuclear installations, but planning to embark on a nuclear power programme, to draft their National Report by identifying the main articles of the CNS to be reported on. Thus, a Contracting Party planning construction of its first nuclear installation should report on steps taken, or planned to be taken, prior to the commencement of construction of a nuclear installation and is encouraged to report on related international peer review missions.

SECRETARIAT

The IAEA serves as the Secretariat for the Convention (hereinafter referred to as "the Secretariat") (Art. 28). Its main duties are to convene, prepare and service the meetings of the Contracting Parties. Meetings shall take place at the Headquarters of the Secretariat, unless the Contracting Parties decide otherwise. To date, all meetings have taken place in Vienna, Austria. A staff member of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security (NS), Division of Nuclear Installation Safety (NSNI), is appointed as the CNS Coordinator. Communication between the Contracting Parties is managed by the Secretariat through diplomatic channels. Notification of a meeting and of other important information or requests is usually made by a 'Note Verbale'

sent by the Secretariat to the Permanent Missions of the Contracting Parties. For practical reasons, and to ensure the timeliness of information, this is supported by electronic mail to the CNS National Contacts and by the placement of such information on the dedicated CNS secure website maintained by the Secretariat. Communication among the CNS National Contacts of the Contracting Parties and with the Secretariat via electronic mail is a vital element of the peer review process.

NATIONAL CONTACT

The National Contact has a central role for the communication among Contracting Parties and between the Secretariat and the Contracting Parties.

Each Contracting Party should identify one person to be nominated as the National Contact (see APPENDIX II for the qualifications of the National Contact). The name and contact details of that person are provided to the Secretariat through the official channels. The National Contact will be provided with access to the CNS secure website and has a variety of tasks to fulfil, in particular:

- receiving information from the Secretariat and forwarding it to the relevant and responsible organization(s) or person(s) within the Contracting Party;
- functioning as a communication and information focal point at all times, not just in connection with the Review Meetings;
- monitoring documents and comments uploaded to the CNS secure website;
- uploading the National Report to the CNS secure website;
- uploading to the CNS secure website the questions and comments related to the National Reports of other Contracting Parties;
- uploading to the CNS secure website the answers to questions posted by other Contracting Parties; and
- reporting in a timely manner all changes in his/her country that might affect the peer review process (e.g. changes in contact details).

These roles and responsibilities make the National Contact an important part of the peer review process of the Convention. Although the National Contact is not an Officer of the Review Meeting under the Convention, his or her timely work is essential for the process. For any new

Contracting Party, nominating a National Contact should be the first step. Each Contracting Party has the responsibility to promptly inform the Secretariat of any changes relating to the National Contact.

The National Contacts are also invited to participate in the Officers' Turn-Over Meeting (APPENDIX II).

RULES OF PROCEDURE AND GUIDELINES

Following the entry into force of the Convention, a Preparatory Meeting was held to adopt Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules, and other associated documents called for under Art. 22 of the Convention in order to support the peer review process.

There are three supporting documents:

(1) *Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules (INFCIRC/573)* [0]

This document sets out the general rules of procedure and financial rules for the peer review process under the Convention.

(2) *Guidelines regarding the Review Process under the Convention on Nuclear Safety (INFCIRC/571)*[0]

This document provides guidance on how the peer review process is best managed.

(3) *Guidelines regarding National Reports under the Convention on Nuclear Safety (INFCIRC/572)*[0]

This document describes what should be contained in the National Reports that have to be prepared by each Contracting Party for review by the other Contracting Parties at the Review Meetings.

These documents may be modified, by consensus, by the Contracting Parties at a Review or Extraordinary Meeting. The most recent versions can be found on the IAEA website at:

<https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-safety-conventions/convention-nuclear-safety>

NATIONAL REPORT

For each Review Meeting, each Contracting Party has to prepare a National Report on the measures it has taken to implement the obligations under the Convention.

Guidelines regarding National Reports under the Convention on Nuclear Safety are the main source of information for the preparation of the National Report. It contains details on the structure and the content of the National Report.

The National Report should be prepared by the Regulatory Body, with the involvement of all parties with responsibilities for the safety of nuclear installations, in particular the licence holders or operating organizations. To facilitate the review process, a stand-alone report, rather than a report restricted to changes and updates only, should be used to avoid the need to reference and review earlier reports.

The National Report covers in general the entire national nuclear safety programme. Preparing such a report helps to significantly improve nuclear safety in the following manner:

- Preparing the first National Report provides a comprehensive assessment of the ‘nuclear safety situation’ in each country by addressing the issues of the articles of the Convention.
- Subsequent National Reports are based on their predecessors and provide the follow-up actions taken since the last Review Meeting, as a continuous self-assessment of the steps and measures already taken, those in progress and future activities, in order to enhance nuclear safety.

If the Contracting Party has no nuclear installation planned or in operation, the report can be short in nature and will focus in particular on Articles 7, 8 and 16 of the Convention. Also, presenting information on activities covered by Articles 9, 10 and 15 of the Convention is encouraged (INFCIRC/572) [0]. Contracting Parties without nuclear installations, but planning to embark on a nuclear power programme, are further encouraged to report in particular on Articles 10 to 19 of the Convention. Additional guidance in this regard is provided in Part E of INFCIRC/572 [0].

The National Report is to be submitted not later than seven and a half months before the Review Meeting.

The National Reports should be submitted electronically, to the secure web site, as a single PDF format file, preferably digitally signed. The file size should not exceed 30 Megabytes. In case of problems with uploading the National Report to the secure website, the Contracting Parties may ask the IAEA Secretariat for support.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Each Contracting Party is given a reasonable opportunity to discuss the National Reports submitted by other Contracting Parties and to seek clarification of such reports (Art. 20). It is vital for the peer review process that each Contracting Party takes an active part in an open and transparent review of its own National Report and those submitted by other Contracting Parties. The main tool in this regard is the submission of comments and questions on the National Reports of other Contracting Parties and the provision of answers to questions from other Contracting Parties. Each Contracting Party is thus expected to post on the CNS secure website any substantial general comments on the quality and contents of the report, on progress made on previous Challenges and Suggestions, and on proposals for Suggestions, Challenges, Good Practices, and Areas of Good Performance, as well as general review conclusions using the template provided in Annex IV to INFCIRC/571 [0].

The questions and comments should be posted by the Contracting Parties on the CNS secure website in the period up to four months before a Review Meeting. The answers should be posted in the period up to one month before a Review Meeting.

In addition, the Contracting Parties give an oral presentation on their National Report, the questions received and the answers given during their respective Country Group Sessions of the Review Meeting.

CONFIDENTIALITY

To enable open and frank discussions between the Contracting Parties based on mutual trust and respect, the content of the debates during the review of the National Reports by the Contracting Parties at each Review Meeting will be confidential. Therefore, the National Reports prepared by the Contracting Parties are also considered to be confidential. However, Contracting Parties are encouraged to make their National Report publicly available by publishing them on the Internet to promote transparency in their regulatory processes.

Starting with the National Reports for the 7th Review Meeting, the Secretariat makes publicly available each National Report, as uploaded to the CNS secure website, within 90 days after the Review Meeting, unless the Contracting Party concerned notifies the Secretariat otherwise (INFCIRC/571) [0].

Further, all National Reports, copies of the Country Review Reports, the Rapporteurs' Reports and the national presentations to the Country Group Sessions are also made available to all Contracting Parties via the CNS secure website (INFCIRC/571) [0].

III. THE REVIEW PROCESS

Being a Contracting Party to the Convention implies certain commitments, namely:

- Preparation and submission of a National Report for review by other Contracting Parties;
- As a result of the review, possible submission of written questions and comments on the National Reports of other Contracting Parties;
- Responding to the questions and comments submitted by other Contracting Parties;
- Active participation in meetings of the Contracting Parties such as Organizational, Review and Extraordinary Meetings.

The review process is governed by a prescribed schedule to enable all Contracting Parties to take part therein. The peer review process is based on a three-year cycle, prescribed in Article 21(3) of the Convention.

Although organized in a cyclical manner, the peer review process implies a commitment to a continuous learning and improving process.

REVIEW SCHEDULE

The review schedule of the Convention has been modified several times since 1999 to incorporate experience gained and to address identified needs.

In accordance with the Convention (Art. 21), “the interval between review meetings shall not exceed three years.” The 1st Review Meeting took place in Vienna from 12 to 23 April 1999; following that, all review meetings up to the 7th were held at a three-year interval. However, due to the COVID pandemic, the 8th Review Meeting was not held in 2020. Based on the decision of the Contracting Parties, the 8th Review Meeting was conducted jointly with the 9th Review Meeting from 20 to 31 March 2023.

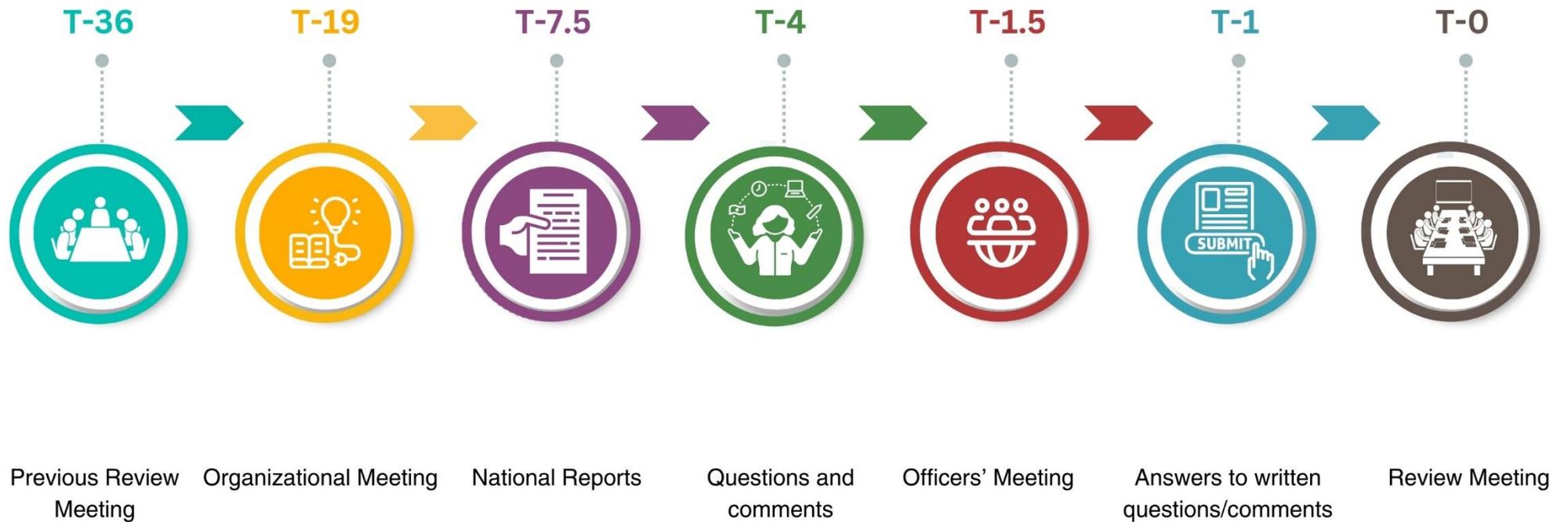
The review schedule for peer reviews, as approved during the 4th CNS Review Meeting, is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Months prior to the Review Meeting	Event
T - 36	Previous Review Meeting
T - 19	Organizational Meeting to assign Country Groups and elect Officers, i.e. the President, two Vice-Presidents, and Country Group Officers (Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Rapporteurs and Coordinators for each Country Group) for the subsequent Convention Review Meeting
T - 7.5	Deadline for submission of National Reports by each Contracting Party (available on CNS secure website)
T - 4	Deadline for submission of written questions and comments on the National Reports of all Contracting Parties (available on the CNS secure website)
T - 1.5	Officers' Meeting
T - 1	Deadline for answers to written questions submitted by each Contracting Party (available on CNS secure website)
T = 0	Review Meeting



CNS REVIEW PROCESS TIMELINE



ORGANIZATIONAL MEETING

An Organizational Meeting is held approximately nineteen months prior to each Review Meeting.

According to Guidelines regarding the Review Process under the Convention on Nuclear Safety (INFCIRC/571) [0], one month in advance of the Organizational Meeting, Contracting Parties are urged to submit to the Secretariat the names of candidates and alternates that they wish to be considered for election to the positions of the Officers. The candidates should be chosen on the basis of, *inter alia*, expertise, impartiality and availability.

Pursuant to Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules (INFCIRC/573) [0], the Organizational Meetings are to:

- elect the President and the two Vice-Presidents of the upcoming Review Meeting;
- establish Country Groups for the upcoming Review Meeting;
- elect the Country Groups' Officers (Chairpersons, Vice-Chairpersons, Rapporteurs and Coordinators) for the upcoming Review Meeting, and assign them to Country Groups so that no Officer is assigned to the Country Group of which his or her country is a member;
- invite any observers to the upcoming Review Meeting;
- recommend a budget for the Review Meeting on the basis of cost estimates provided by the Secretariat;
- consider any other matters relevant to implementation of the Convention, to the extent that they have not been resolved at the most recent Review Meeting;
- decide on a provisional timetable for the Review Meeting;
- suggest topics that could warrant special attention by the Contracting Parties in preparing their upcoming National Reports; and
- decide whether to organize no more than two topical sessions at the Review Meeting, each addressing more specifically a particular topic that may not be thoroughly considered within the Country Group arrangements, to be attended on a voluntary basis.

The Country Groups are established according to the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules (INFCIRC/573) [0] and APPENDIX III to the Guidelines regarding the Review Process (INFCIRC/571) [0], which details the method of determining the composition of the Country Groups.

OFFICERS OF THE REVIEW MEETING

As provided by the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules (INFCIRC/573) [0], Officers of the Review Meeting are:

- The President.
- The two Vice-Presidents.
- For each Country Group:
 - the Chairperson;
 - the Vice-Chairperson;
 - the Rapporteur;
 - the Coordinator.

The roles and responsibilities of the Officers are described in the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules (INFCIRC/573) [0] and in APPENDIX II to the Guidelines regarding the Review Process (INFCIRC/571) [0], which are provided in APPENDIX II to this brochure. The main functions of the Officers are as follows:

- **President**

The President of the Review Meeting directs and oversees the review process and the functioning of the Review Meeting. His/her prime responsibility is to preside at the Plenary Sessions of the Review Meeting. The President chairs the General Committee. With the support of Rapporteurs, the President prepares a draft Summary Report to be adopted at the Final Plenary Session of the Review Meeting. In addition, the President prepares a separate President's Report tabled at the Final Plenary Session of the Review Meeting. Moreover, the President represents the Contracting Parties attending the Review Meeting to the media.

- **Vice-President** (two Vice-Presidents are elected for each review meeting)

The Vice-President(s) of the Review Meeting replace(s) the President if and when necessary and assist(s) the President as appropriate (e.g. chairing meetings of the groups and committees), on the President's request.

- **Country Group Chairperson**

The Country Group Chairperson's prime responsibility is to chair and generally manage the Country Group Sessions. He/she has to participate in Plenary Sessions in order to implement, in his/her Country Group, the decisions of the Plenary Session. Moreover, the Chairperson should stimulate the discussions in the Country Group Session and support the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Country Review Reports and the Rapporteur's Report.

- **Country Group Vice-Chairperson**

The Country Group Vice-Chairperson replaces the Country Group Chairperson in any of the duties of the Chairperson, as needed, and supports the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Country Review Reports and the Rapporteur's Report.

- **Rapporteur**

The Rapporteur has a key function within the peer review process. His/her prime responsibility is to be familiar with the National Reports to be presented in the Country Group and the Coordinator's analysis and to prepare before the Review Meeting the initial draft Country Review Report for each National Report of the Country Group members. This initial draft will be made available for comments to the Country Group members two weeks ahead of the Review Meeting and will be finalised after discussions in the Country Group. The Rapporteur highlights topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be Areas of Good Performance and/or Good Practices or areas where follow-up at a subsequent Review Meeting would be desirable.

At the Final Plenary Session of the Review Meeting, the Rapporteur makes a presentation on the peer review findings of the Country Group (Rapporteur's Report) that summarizes the discussions that took place in the Country Group and their conclusions.

- **Coordinator**

The Coordinator's prime responsibility is to analyse the National Reports of the Country Group as well as all written questions and comments submitted prior to the Review Meeting. He/she groups these comments and questions according to the Convention's articles and analyses them objectively. In doing so, the Coordinator should identify any trends, major themes and issues arising from these questions and comments. The Coordinator is to provide his/her analysis to the Contracting Parties two months prior to the Review Meeting. The Coordinator also supports the Chairperson in communicating with the members of the Country Group, and follows up with National Contacts in the

event of missed deadlines. At the Country Group Sessions, the Coordinator supports the Chairperson in addressing all major themes and issues arising from the analysis of questions and comments during discussions of the respective National Report.

The Officers are considered the ‘backbone’ of the peer review process. Officers elected at one Organizational Meeting remain in these roles until they are replaced at the next Organizational Meeting, thus serving essentially a three-year term of office. Whenever possible, there should be at least one Officer in each Country Group who has previous experience as an Officer under the Convention.

OFFICERS’ TURN-OVER MEETING

As described by INFICIRC/571 [0], the Secretariat will organize a one-day “Officers’ turnover meeting”, where incoming and outgoing Officers of the Review Meeting can exchange their experience by describing the process in detail, including key documents, and ensure the transfer of knowledge on the CNS, its processes and the role of Officers in order to contribute to enhancing the efficiency and effectiveness of the peer review process.

The National Contacts are also invited to participate in the Officers’ Turn-over Meeting.

OFFICERS’ MEETING

About one and a half months prior to the Review Meeting, all Officers meet to consider the overall approach and the final preparations for the Review Meeting. The Secretariat gives general information on the preparation for the Review Meeting, such as logistical and organizational matters, as well as procedural proposals to be dealt with by the Contracting Parties. The Country Group Coordinators provide an objective analysis of the questions received by the members of the respective Country Group, identifying any trends in the questions and comments of Contracting Parties concerning the National Reports already received.

At this meeting, the Officers also agree on a template for the Country Review Reports, and other templates to be used for the purpose of the peer review, and upon the approach for the presentation of National Reports giving an appropriate use of the time allocated to each Contracting Party.

The Officers Meeting is usually chaired by the President of the Review Meeting, with the assistance of the two Vice-Presidents.

REVIEW MEETING

Review Meetings are held every three years, in accordance with Article 21 (3) of the Convention, and provide the opportunity to review the National Reports of all Contracting Parties.

During the first decade after the Convention was drawn up, the focus of the Review Meetings was on specific technical safety issues of concern. During these years, it was demonstrated that technical lessons had been learned and that safety improvements had been or were being implemented.

Since then, the Contracting Parties have been focusing on the continuous improvement of nuclear safety in their countries. In achieving that goal, a long-standing commitment to, and vigilance concerning, safety at all organizational levels is necessary. Effective mechanisms for the early detection and assessment of problems and, most importantly, efficient networks and systems to share the lessons learned have to be established. Enhanced use of the Convention and its communication channels is essential for attaining this goal.

The rules require each Contracting Party participating in the Review Meeting to be represented by one delegate, who may be accompanied by such alternate representatives, experts and advisers, as required. The languages of the Plenary Sessions of the Review Meetings are Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish, unless otherwise decided by the Contracting Parties at the Organizational Meeting.

The Review Meeting consists of three main parts: the Opening Plenary Session, the Country Group Sessions and the Final Plenary Session.

1. Opening Plenary Session

The Opening Plenary Session is a relatively short session for discussing necessary procedural matters, including the examination of the delegates' credentials, with regard to the conduct of that Review Meeting. National statements are possible and are acceptable in written form only, according to the Rules of Procedure.

2. Country Group Sessions

After the Opening Plenary Session, the Contracting Parties split into Country Groups for the purpose of reviewing in depth the National Reports of the other Contracting Parties within the group. The Country Group Sessions usually require the full remainder of the first week.

The Contracting Parties assigned to each Country Group participate as full members at all sessions of that group. Other Contracting Parties, in particular, those that have submitted written questions concerning the National Report of the Contracting Party under review, participate throughout the Country Group's discussions on that National Report and representatives of any other Contracting Party, such representatives having the right to observe, without the right to participate, in the Country Group sessions.

Each Country Group reviews the National Reports of its members in a consistent and objective manner. The peer review process commences with the distribution of all National Reports seven months prior to the Review Meeting, and with the submittal of written questions and comments to the CNS secure website. Thus, it can be expected that the Country Group Sessions will focus on the reported changes since the previous Review Meeting and the actual situation.

According to the Guidelines regarding the Review Process, the sessions start with a short national presentation by the Contracting Party under review based on the agreed template.

The Contracting Party will then respond to the substantive written questions and comments submitted on the CNS secure website or to the Country Group Coordinator, regardless of whether the questions or comments were submitted by members of that Country Group or by other interested Contracting Parties.

A discussion period on the National Report and on all the questions and comments that have been submitted will follow. For this discussion, the draft Country Review Report developed ahead of the Review Meeting¹ is to be considered and finalised by the Country Group.

¹ According to INFCIRC/571 (Guidelines regarding the Review Process), the Country Review Report should be based on a template seeking, *inter alia*, information and views on the objective comments on the general quality of the National Report; the compliance of the National Report with the topics defined in INFCIRC/572 (Guidelines regarding the National Reports) or those requested following the Organizational Meeting; the level of transparency of the National Report; the identification of Suggestions for improvements and future Challenges; and any peer review conclusions and recommendations.

Finally, the Country Group members should, as full participants, discuss and agree on the Country Review Report. The Country Review Report: must provide a balanced summary of the views expressed in the discussion on the National Report in question; should include points of agreement and disagreement; should identify Good Practices, Areas of Good Performance and Challenges, as well as highlight any areas of concern; and should list the main themes/topics identified for discussion at the Final Plenary Session.

The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Rapporteur, following discussion with the Country Group members, will finalise, on the basis of the Country Review Report, the Rapporteur's Report to be presented at a Plenary Session of the Review Meeting by the Country Group's Rapporteur.



Opening Plenary



Country Group Sessions

Presentation of Country National Report
Answers to Written Q&Cs, Additional Questions,
Discussion, Remarks, Good Practices, Areas of Good
Performance, Challenges, Suggestions



Country Review Reports

Participants: Country Group Members and
Countries with Written Q&Cs



Final Plenary Session

Rapporteurs' Reports
Summary Report
President's Report

– **General Committee**

During the Review Meeting, a General Committee is established to assist the President in the general conduct of the business of the Review Meeting.

It is composed of the President (Chairperson), the two Vice-Presidents and the Chairpersons of the Country Groups. No two members of the General Committee shall be members of the same delegation. If the President is unable to attend a session of the General Committee, he or she may designate one of the Vice-Presidents to preside at that session.

Staff members of the Secretariat, usually the legal advisor, the Secretary and the Scientific Secretary, and the pen of the Convention, are also invited to this meeting, as appropriate.

– **Open-Ended Working Group**

An Open-Ended Working Group is usually established by the Contracting Parties at the Opening Plenary Session of the Review Meeting. The sessions of the Open-ended Working Group usually take place during the first week of the Review Meeting at the end of each day. According to the Guidelines regarding the Review Process, the Open-ended Working Group is usually chaired by one of the Vice-Presidents of the Review Meeting.

The purpose of the Open-ended Working Group is to discuss and further develop the proposals that have been submitted by the Contracting Parties prior to, or during, the Review Meeting.

The proposals are generally directed at further improving the openness, transparency and effectiveness of the peer review process and sometimes require the amendment of the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules and the associated Guidelines.

Once the participating Contracting Parties have reached an agreement on the proposals in the Open-ended Working Group, these are forwarded to the Final Plenary Session of the Review Meeting for the consideration of all Contracting Parties attending the Review Meeting.

3. Final Plenary Session

At the Final Plenary Session of the Review Meeting, Rapporteurs make a presentation on the peer review findings of the Country Groups, summarizing for each Contracting Party in turn the most important observations as documented in the Country Review Reports, including points of agreement and disagreement, Good Practices, Areas of Good Performances, Challenges, as well as any areas of concern.

After this presentation, each Contracting Party has an opportunity to respond to the comments made on its National Report. In addition, other Contracting Parties can comment on National Reports and on the Rapporteur's Report.

The Final Plenary Session also discusses any procedural matters proposed by the Contracting Parties relevant to the implementation of the Convention. Modifications to the Rules of Procedure and to the Guidelines may also be adopted by the Contracting Parties by consensus.

The Plenary Session discusses and adopts, by consensus, the Summary Report of the Review Meeting. This document addresses the issues discussed and the conclusions reached during the meeting. The Summary Report is made available to the public.

Finally, the Plenary Session takes note of the President's Report of the Review Meeting, which summarizes all observations on the conduct of the meeting, the conclusions of the Open-ended Working Group and all decisions taken by the Contracting Parties.

4. Press conference and invitation of journalists

According to the INFCIRC/571 [0], journalists may be invited to attend the opening plenary sessions, as well as part of the final plenary session at which the final version of the Summary Report of the Review Meeting is adopted.

Moreover, at the end of each Review Meeting, the President, Vice-Presidents and the Country Group Chairpersons shall be available for a press conference.

EXTRAORDINARY MEETING

An Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties may be held in addition to a Review Meeting, if a majority of Contracting Parties agrees either at a meeting or following a written request of a Contracting Party/Contracting Parties. The Extraordinary Meeting is a meeting of the Contracting Parties, like a Review Meeting, and the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules apply *mutatis mutandis* to Extraordinary Meetings (see Rule 44 of the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules for further details, INFCIRC/573) [0].

The President and Vice-Presidents of the most recent Review Meeting serve in the same capacity at the Extraordinary Meeting.

To date, two Extraordinary Meetings were conducted at the IAEA Headquarters, in Vienna, Austria.

The 1st Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties was held on 28 September 2009 to discuss and agree on proposed modifications to INFCIRC/572 [0].

Then, following the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear power plant accident, in Japan, the Contracting Parties decided at their 5th Review Meeting to organize an Extraordinary Meeting, the aim of which was to enhance safety through reviewing and sharing lessons learned and actions taken by Contracting Parties in response to events of Fukushima and to review the effectiveness and, if necessary, the continued suitability of the provisions of the CNS. The 2nd Extraordinary Meeting of the Contracting Parties was held from 27 to 31 August 2012.

The conclusions of these meetings can be found via the link to ‘past meetings’ on the IAEA webpage on the Convention:

<https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-safety-conventions/convention-nuclear-safety>

VIENNA DECLARATION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY

A Diplomatic Conference² was convened in Vienna, Austria, on 9 February 2015, to consider a proposal by Switzerland to amend the CNS. During the Diplomatic Conference, the Contracting Parties unanimously adopted the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety (“the Vienna Declaration”), which includes principles for the implementation of the objective of the Convention to prevent accidents with radiological consequences and mitigate such consequences should they occur.

For its widest dissemination, the Vienna Declaration was circulated as an Information Circular (INFCIRC/872 – see APPENDIX III of the brochure) [0].

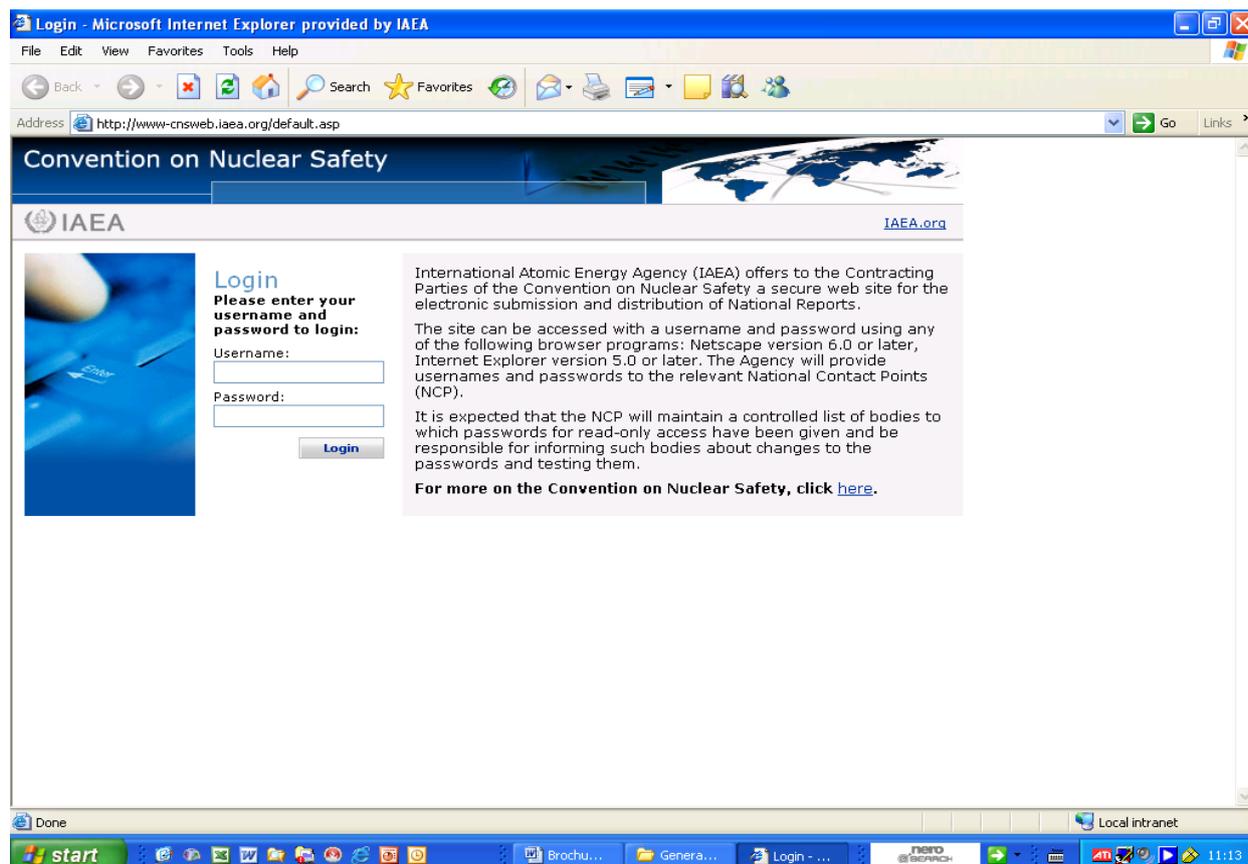
The Contracting Parties decided that the principles contained in the Vienna Declaration should be reflected in their actions, in particular during the preparation of their National Reports, starting with the National Reports for the 7th Review Meeting. Further, Contracting Parties committed to ensure that the safety objectives set out in the Vienna Declaration form an integral part of considerations during future Review Meetings and will be used as a reference to help strengthen the peer review process of the CNS.

² Pursuant to Article 32 of the Convention, Switzerland had submitted a formal proposal to amend Article 18 of the Convention on Nuclear Safety, INFCIRC/449. At the 6th CNS Review Meeting, the Contracting Parties decided by a two-thirds majority to submit the proposal to a Diplomatic Conference to be convened within one year, for further consideration.

CNS SECURE WEBSITE

Since 2004, the IAEA has offered to the Contracting Parties of the Convention a secure CNS website. The website was comprehensively redesigned in 2019. The secure website allows for the electronic submission and distribution of all documents submitted by the Contracting Parties and of the reports developed during the meetings and also serves as a platform for the IAEA Secretariat to circulate all relevant information to the Contracting Parties. The website has become a major communication tool between the Contracting Parties and the Secretariat in support of the CNS review process.

The CNS secure website, linked to/from the public IAEA webpage on the Convention (<https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-safety-conventions/convention-nuclear-safety>) can be accessed with a username and password.



The website is used in particular for the submission of:

- National Reports, as required by Art. 5 of the Convention and pursuant to Rule 40 (1) of the Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules, and taking into account Sections VI and VIII of the Guidelines regarding the Review Process;
- Questions and comments on the National Reports, as provided by Sections VI and VIII of the Guidelines regarding the Review Process;
- Answers to the questions concerning the National Reports, as provided by Section VIII of the Guidelines regarding the Review Process;
- Contracting Parties' review of other National Reports (as provided under Section VI and Annex IV to the Guidelines regarding the Review Process);
- Country Review Reports;
- Country Group Coordinator's Reports;
- Rapporteur's Reports;
- National presentations to the Country Group Sessions;
- Meeting Reports; and
- Correspondence by the Secretariat.

The website also provides a variety of general information for users (e.g. dates and deadlines, Country Groups composition, National Contacts, Officers). The website also assigns different user privileges for general users, CNS National Contacts, Officers, and the Secretariat.

For each Contracting Party, one person is nominated to act as the National Contact. The Secretariat provides usernames and passwords to the National Contact to assure the necessary confidentiality according to Art. 27 of the Convention. The National Contact has writing rights for uploading his or her own National Report, posting questions to other Contracting Parties on their National Reports, and uploading the answers to questions posted by other Contracting Parties.

To become a user of the website, a National Contact needs to submit to the Secretariat a filled-in and signed registration form. For other requests, the access to the website is only granted with the approval of the CNS National Contact or if the National Contact has been in copy to the request email.

It is expected that the National Contact will maintain a controlled list of persons to whom passwords for read-only access have been given and be responsible for informing the Secretariat

about any changes, especially when access to the CNS secure website should no longer be granted.

Finally, the IAEA webpage on the Convention (<https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-safety-conventions/convention-nuclear-safety>) also includes publicly available information on the Review Meetings, Organizational Meetings, including Summary Reports and statements and the National Reports of those Contracting Parties who did not object to their reports being made publicly available.

REFERENCES:

- [1]. Convention on Nuclear Safety (INFCIRC/449), IAEA, Vienna 1994.
- [2]. General Conference, Nuclear and Radiation Safety, GC(67)/RES/7, IAEA 2023.
- [3]. Guidelines regarding the Review Process under the Convention on Nuclear Safety (INFCIRC/571/Rev.8).
- [4]. Guidelines regarding National Reports under the Convention on Nuclear Safety (INFCIRC/572/Rev.7).
- [5]. Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules (INFCIRC/573/Rev.7).
- [6]. Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety (INFCIRC/872).

APPENDIX I

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

INFCIRC/449

DATE: 5 JULY 1994

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

ORIGINAL: ARABIC, CHINESE, ENGLISH

FRENCH, RUSSIAN, SPANISH

CONVENTION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY

1. The Convention on Nuclear Safety was adopted on 17 June 1994 by a Diplomatic Conference convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency at its Headquarters from 14 to 17 June 1994. The Convention will be opened for signature on 20 September 1994 during the thirty-eighth regular session of the Agency's General Conference and will enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit with the Depositary (the Agency's Director General) of the twenty-second instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval, including the instruments of seventeen States, having each at least one nuclear installation which has achieved criticality in a reactor core.

2. The text of the Convention as adopted is reproduced in the Annex hereto for the information of all Member States.

Preamble

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

- i) Aware of the importance to the international community of ensuring that the use of nuclear energy is safe, well regulated and environmentally sound;
- ii) Reaffirming the necessity of continuing to promote a high level of nuclear safety worldwide;
- iii) Reaffirming that responsibility for nuclear safety rests with the State having jurisdiction over a nuclear installation;
- iv) Desiring to promote an effective nuclear safety culture;
- v) Aware that accidents at nuclear installations have the potential for transboundary impacts;
- vi) Keeping in mind the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (1979), the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (1986), and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (1986);
- vii) Affirming the importance of international co-operation for the enhancement of nuclear safety through existing bilateral and multilateral mechanisms and the establishment of this incentive Convention;

viii) Recognizing that this Convention entails a commitment to the application of fundamental safety principles for nuclear installations rather than of detailed safety standards and that there are internationally formulated safety guidelines which are updated from time to time and so can provide guidance on contemporary means of achieving a high level of safety;

ix) Affirming the need to begin promptly the development of an international convention on the safety of radioactive waste management as soon as the ongoing process to develop waste management safety fundamentals has resulted in broad international agreement;

x) Recognizing the usefulness of further technical work in connection with the safety of other parts of the nuclear fuel cycle, and that this work may, in time, facilitate the development of current or future international instruments;

HAVE AGREED as follows:

CHAPTER 1

OBJECTIVES, DEFINITIONS AND SCOPE OF APPLICATION

ARTICLE 1. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this Convention are:

i) to achieve and maintain a high level of nuclear safety worldwide through the enhancement of national measures and international co-operation including, where appropriate, safety-related technical co-operation;

ii) to establish and maintain effective defences in nuclear installations against potential radiological hazards in order to protect individuals, society and the environment from harmful effects of ionizing radiation from such installations;

iii) to prevent accidents with radiological consequences and to mitigate such consequences should they occur.

ARTICLE 2. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this Convention:

i) "nuclear installation" means for each Contracting Party any land-based civil nuclear power plant under its jurisdiction including such storage, handling and treatment facilities for radioactive materials as are on the same site and are directly related to the operation of the nuclear power plant. Such a plant ceases to be a nuclear installation when all nuclear fuel elements have been removed permanently from the reactor core and have been stored safely in accordance with approved procedures, and a decommissioning programme has been agreed to by the regulatory body.

ii) "regulatory body" means for each Contracting Party any body or bodies given the legal authority by that Contracting Party to grant licences and to regulate the siting, design, construction, commissioning, operation or decommissioning of nuclear installations.

iii) "licence" means any authorization granted by the regulatory body to the applicant to have the responsibility for the siting, design, construction, commissioning, operation or decommissioning of a nuclear installation.

ARTICLE 3. SCOPE OF APPLICATION

This Convention shall apply to the safety of nuclear installations.

CHAPTER 2 OBLIGATIONS

a) General Provisions

ARTICLE 4. IMPLEMENTING MEASURES

Each Contracting Party shall take, within the framework of its national law, the legislative, regulatory and administrative measures and other steps necessary for implementing its obligations under this Convention.

ARTICLE 5. REPORTING

Each Contracting Party shall submit for review, prior to each meeting referred to in Article 20, a report on the measures it has taken to implement each of the obligations of this Convention.

ARTICLE 6. EXISTING NUCLEAR INSTALLATIONS

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that the safety of nuclear installations existing at the time the Convention enters into force for that Contracting Party is reviewed as soon as possible. When necessary in the context of this Convention, the Contracting Party shall ensure that all reasonably practicable improvements are made as a matter of urgency to upgrade the safety of the nuclear installation. If such upgrading cannot be achieved, plans should be implemented to shut down the nuclear installation as soon as practically possible. The timing of the shut-down may take into account the whole energy context and possible alternatives as well as the social, environmental and economic impact.

b) Legislation and Regulation

ARTICLE 7. LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

1. Each Contracting Party shall establish and maintain a legislative and regulatory framework to govern the safety of nuclear installations.
2. The legislative and regulatory framework shall provide for:

- i) the establishment of applicable national safety requirements and regulations;
- ii) a system of licensing with regard to nuclear installations and the prohibition of the operation of a nuclear installation without a licence;
- iii) a system of regulatory inspection and assessment of nuclear installations to ascertain compliance with applicable regulations and the terms of licences;
- iv) the enforcement of applicable regulations and of the terms of licences, including suspension, modification or revocation.

ARTICLE 8. REGULATORY BODY

1. Each Contracting Party shall establish or designate a regulatory body entrusted with the implementation of the legislative and regulatory framework referred to in Article 7, and provided with adequate authority, competence and financial and human resources to fulfil its assigned responsibilities.
2. Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure an effective separation between the functions of the regulatory body and those of any other body or organization concerned with the promotion or utilization of nuclear energy.

ARTICLE 9. RESPONSIBILITY OF THE LICENCE HOLDER

Each Contracting Party shall ensure that prime responsibility for the safety of a nuclear installation rests with the holder of the relevant licence and shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that each such licence holder meets its responsibility.

c) General Safety Considerations

ARTICLE 10. PRIORITY TO SAFETY

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that all organizations engaged in activities directly related to nuclear installations shall establish policies that give due priority to nuclear safety.

ARTICLE 11. FINANCIAL AND HUMAN RESOURCES

1. Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that adequate financial resources are available to support the safety of each nuclear installation throughout its life.
2. Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that sufficient numbers of qualified staff with appropriate education, training and retraining are available for all safety-related activities in or for each nuclear installation, throughout its life.

ARTICLE 12. HUMAN FACTORS

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that the capabilities and limitations of human performance are taken into account throughout the life of a nuclear installation.

ARTICLE 13. QUALITY ASSURANCE

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that quality assurance programmes are established and implemented with a view to providing confidence that specified requirements for all activities important to nuclear safety are satisfied throughout the life of a nuclear installation.

ARTICLE 14. ASSESSMENT AND VERIFICATION OF SAFETY

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that:

- i) comprehensive and systematic safety assessments are carried out before the construction and commissioning of a nuclear installation and throughout its life. Such assessments shall be well documented, subsequently updated in the light of operating experience and significant new safety information, and reviewed under the authority of the regulatory body;
- ii) verification by analysis, surveillance, testing and inspection is carried out to ensure that the physical state and the operation of a nuclear installation continue to be in accordance with its design, applicable national safety requirements, and operational limits and conditions.

ARTICLE 15. RADIATION PROTECTION

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that in all operational states the radiation exposure to the workers and the public caused by a nuclear installation shall be kept as low as reasonably achievable and that no individual shall be exposed to radiation doses which exceed prescribed national dose limits.

ARTICLE 16. EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

1. Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that there are on-site and off-site emergency plans that are routinely tested for nuclear installations and cover the activities to be carried out in the event of an emergency.

For any new nuclear installation, such plans shall be prepared and tested before it commences operation above a low power level agreed by the regulatory body.

2. Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that, insofar as they are likely to be affected by a radiological emergency, its own population and the competent

authorities of the States in the vicinity of the nuclear installation are provided with appropriate information for emergency planning and response.

3. Contracting Parties which do not have a nuclear installation on their territory, insofar as they are likely to be affected in the event of a radiological emergency at a nuclear installation in the vicinity, shall take the appropriate steps for the preparation and testing of emergency plans for their territory that cover the activities to be carried out in the event of such an emergency.

d) Safety of Installations

ARTICLE 17. SITING

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that appropriate procedures are established and implemented:

- i) for evaluating all relevant site-related factors likely to affect the safety of a nuclear installation for its projected lifetime;
- ii) for evaluating the likely safety impact of a proposed nuclear installation on individuals, society and the environment;
- iii) for re-evaluating as necessary all relevant factors referred to in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) so as to ensure the continued safety acceptability of the nuclear installation;
- iv) for consulting Contracting Parties in the vicinity of a proposed nuclear installation, insofar as they are likely to be affected by that installation and, upon request providing the necessary information to such Contracting Parties, in order to enable them to evaluate and make their own assessment of the likely safety impact on their own territory of the nuclear installation.

ARTICLE 18. DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that:

- i) the design and construction of a nuclear installation provides for several reliable levels and methods of protection (defense in depth) against the release of radioactive materials, with a view to preventing the occurrence of accidents and to mitigating their radiological consequences should they occur;
- ii) the technologies incorporated in the design and construction of a nuclear installation are proven by experience or qualified by testing or analysis;
- iii) the design of a nuclear installation allows for reliable, stable and easily manageable operation, with specific consideration of human factors and the man-machine interface.

ARTICLE 19. OPERATION

Each Contracting Party shall take the appropriate steps to ensure that:

- i) the initial authorization to operate a nuclear installation is based upon an appropriate safety analysis and a commissioning programme demonstrating that the installation, as constructed, is consistent with design and safety requirements;
- ii) operational limits and conditions derived from the safety analysis, tests and operational experience are defined and revised as necessary for identifying safe boundaries for operation;
- iii) operation, maintenance, inspection and testing of a nuclear installation are conducted in accordance with approved procedures;
- iv) procedures are established for responding to anticipated operational occurrences and to accidents;
- v) necessary engineering and technical support in all safety-related fields is available throughout the lifetime of a nuclear installation;
- vi) incidents significant to safety are reported in a timely manner by the holder of the relevant licence to the regulatory body;
- vii) programmes to collect and analyse operating experience are established, the results obtained and the conclusions drawn are acted upon and that existing mechanisms are used to share important experience with international bodies and with other operating organizations and regulatory bodies;
- viii) the generation of radioactive waste resulting from the operation of a nuclear installation is kept to the minimum practicable for the process concerned, both in activity and in volume, and any necessary treatment and storage of spent fuel and waste directly related to the operation and on the same site as that of the nuclear installation take into consideration conditioning and disposal.

CHAPTER 3. MEETINGS OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

ARTICLE 20. REVIEW MEETINGS

1. The Contracting Parties shall hold meetings (hereinafter referred to as "review meetings") for the purpose of reviewing the reports submitted pursuant to Article 5 in accordance with the procedures adopted under Article 22.
2. Subject to the provisions of Article 24, sub-groups comprised of representatives of Contracting Parties may be established and may function during the review meetings as deemed necessary for the purpose of reviewing specific subjects contained in the reports.

3. Each Contracting Party shall have a reasonable opportunity to discuss the reports submitted by other Contracting Parties and to seek clarification of such reports.

ARTICLE 21. TIMETABLE

1. A preparatory meeting of the Contracting Parties shall be held not later than six months after the date of entry into force of this Convention.

2. At this preparatory meeting, the Contracting Parties shall determine the date for the first review meeting. This review meeting shall be held as soon as possible, but not later than thirty months after the date of entry into force of this Convention.

3. At each review meeting, the Contracting Parties shall determine the date for the next such meeting. The interval between review meetings shall not exceed three years.

ARTICLE 22. PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMENTS

1. At the preparatory meeting held pursuant to Article 21 the Contracting Parties shall prepare and adopt by consensus Rules of Procedure and Financial Rules. The Contracting Parties shall establish in particular and in accordance with the Rules of Procedure:

- i) guidelines regarding the form and structure of the reports to be submitted pursuant to Article 5;
- ii) a date for the submission of such reports;
- iii) the process for reviewing such reports.

2. At review meetings, the Contracting Parties may, if necessary, review the arrangements established pursuant to sub-paragraphs (i)-(iii) above, and adopt revisions by consensus unless otherwise provided for in the Rules of Procedure. They may also amend the Rules of Procedure and the Financial Rules, by consensus.

ARTICLE 23. EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

An extraordinary meeting of the Contracting Parties shall be held:

- i) if so agreed by a majority of the Contracting Parties present and voting at a meeting, abstentions being considered as voting; or
- ii) at the written request of a Contracting Party, within six months of this request having been communicated to the Contracting Parties and notification having been received by the secretariat referred to in Article 28, that the request has been supported by a majority of the Contracting Parties.

ARTICLE 24. ATTENDANCE

1. Each Contracting Party shall attend meetings of the Contracting Parties and be represented at such meetings by one delegate, and by such alternates, experts and advisers as it deems necessary.
2. The Contracting Parties may invite, by consensus, any intergovernmental organization which is competent in respect of matters governed by this Convention to attend, as an observer, any meeting, or specific sessions thereof. Observers shall be required to accept in writing, and in advance, the provisions of Article 27.

ARTICLE 25. SUMMARY REPORTS

The Contracting Parties shall adopt, by consensus, and make available to the public a document addressing issues discussed and conclusions reached during a meeting.

ARTICLE 26. LANGUAGES

1. The languages of meetings of the Contracting Parties shall be Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish unless otherwise provided in the Rules of Procedure.
2. Reports submitted pursuant to Article 5 shall be prepared in the national language of the submitting Contracting Party or in a single designated language to be agreed in the Rules of Procedure. Should the report be submitted in a national language other than the designated language, a translation of the report into the designated language shall be provided by the Contracting Party.
3. Notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph 2, if compensated, the secretariat will assume the translation into the designated language of reports submitted in any other language of the meeting.

ARTICLE 27. CONFIDENTIALITY

1. The provisions of this Convention shall not affect the rights and obligations of the Contracting Parties under their law to protect information from disclosure. For the purposes of this Article, "information" includes, inter alia, (i) personal data; (ii) information protected by intellectual property rights or by industrial or commercial confidentiality; and (iii) information relating to national security or to the physical protection of nuclear materials or nuclear installations.
2. When, in the context of this Convention, a Contracting Party provides information identified by it as protected as described in paragraph 1, such information shall be used only for the purposes for which it has been provided and its confidentiality shall be respected.
3. The content of the debates during the reviewing of the reports by the Contracting Parties at each meeting shall be confidential.

ARTICLE 28. SECRETARIAT

1. The International Atomic Energy Agency (hereinafter referred to as the "Agency") shall provide the secretariat for the meetings of the Contracting Parties.
2. The secretariat shall:
 - i) convene, prepare and service the meetings of the Contracting Parties;
 - ii) transmit to the Contracting Parties information received or prepared in accordance with the provisions of this Convention.

The costs incurred by the Agency in carrying out the functions referred to in sub-paragraphs (i) and (ii) above shall be borne by the Agency as part of its regular budget.

3. The Contracting Parties may, by consensus, request the Agency to provide other services in support of meetings of the Contracting Parties. The Agency may provide such services if they can be undertaken within its programme and regular budget. Should this not be possible, the Agency may provide such services if voluntary funding is provided from another source.

CHAPTER 4. FINAL CLAUSES AND OTHER PROVISIONS

ARTICLE 29. RESOLUTION OF DISAGREEMENTS

In the event of a disagreement between two or more Contracting Parties concerning the interpretation or application of this Convention, the Contracting Parties shall consult within the framework of a meeting of the Contracting Parties with a view to resolving the disagreement.

ARTICLE 30. SIGNATURE, RATIFICATION, ACCEPTANCE, APPROVAL, ACCESSION

1. This Convention shall be open for signature by all States at the Headquarters of the Agency in Vienna from 20 September 1994 until its entry into force.
2. This Convention is subject to ratification, acceptance or approval by the signatory States.
3. After its entry into force, this Convention shall be open for accession by all States.
4.
 - i) This Convention shall be open for signature or accession by regional organizations of an integration or other nature, provided that any such organization is constituted by sovereign States and has competence in respect of the negotiation, conclusion and application of international agreements in matters covered by this Convention.
 - ii) In matters within their competence, such organizations shall, on their own behalf, exercise the rights and fulfil the responsibilities which this Convention attributes to States Parties.
 - iii) When becoming party to this Convention, such an organization shall communicate to the Depositary referred to in Article 34, a declaration indicating which States are members thereof,

which articles of this Convention apply to it, and the extent of its competence in the field covered by those articles.

iv) Such an organization shall not hold any vote additional to those of its Member States.

5. Instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession shall be deposited with the Depositary.

ARTICLE 31. ENTRY INTO FORCE

1. This Convention shall enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit with the Depositary of the twenty-second instrument of ratification, acceptance or approval, including the instruments of seventeen States, each having at least one nuclear installation which has achieved criticality in a reactor core.

2. For each State or regional organization of an integration of other nature which ratifies, accepts, approves or accedes to this Convention after the date of deposit of the last instrument required to satisfy the conditions set forth in paragraph 1, this Convention shall enter into force on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit with the Depositary of the appropriate instrument by such a State or organization.

ARTICLE 32. AMENDMENTS TO THE CONVENTION

1. Any Contracting party may propose an amendment to this Convention. Proposed amendments shall be considered at a review meeting or an extraordinary meeting.

2. The text of any proposed amendment and the reasons for it shall be provided to the Depositary who shall communicate the proposal to the Contracting Parties promptly and at least ninety days before the meeting for which it is submitted for consideration. Any comments received on such a proposal shall be circulated by the Depositary to the Contracting Parties.

3. The Contracting Parties shall decide after consideration of the proposed amendment whether to adopt it by consensus, or, in the absence of consensus, to submit it to a Diplomatic Conference. A decision to submit a proposed amendment to a Diplomatic Conference shall require a two-thirds majority vote of the Contracting Parties present and voting at the meeting, provided that at least one half of the Contracting Parties are present at the time of voting. Abstentions shall be considered as voting.

4. The Diplomatic Conference to consider and adopt amendments to this Convention shall be convened by the Depositary and held no later than one year after the appropriate decision taken in accordance with paragraph 3 of this Article. The Diplomatic Conference shall make every effort to ensure amendments are adopted by consensus. Should this not be possible, amendments shall be adopted with a two-thirds majority of all Contracting Parties.

5. Amendments to this Convention adopted pursuant to paragraphs 3 and 4 above shall be subject to ratification, acceptance, approval, or confirmation by the Contracting Parties and shall enter into force for those Contracting Parties which have ratified, accepted, approved or confirmed them on the ninetieth day after the receipt by the Depositary of the relevant instruments by at least three-fourths of the Contracting Parties. For a Contracting Party which

subsequently ratifies, accepts, approves or confirms the said amendments, the amendments will enter into force on the ninetieth day after that Contracting Party has deposited its relevant instrument.

ARTICLE 33. DENUNCIATION

1. Any Contracting Party may denounce this Convention by written notification to the Depositary.
2. Denunciation shall take effect one year following the date of the receipt of the notification by the Depositary, or on such later date as may be specified in the notification.

ARTICLE 34. DEPOSITARY

1. The Director General of the Agency shall be the Depositary of this Convention.
2. The Depositary shall inform the Contracting Parties of:
 - i) the signature of this Convention and of the deposit of instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession, in accordance with Article 30;
 - ii) the date on which the Convention enters into force, in accordance with Article 31;
 - iii) the notifications of denunciation of the Convention and the date thereof, made in accordance with Article 33;
 - iv) the proposed amendments to this Convention submitted by Contracting Parties, the amendments adopted by the relevant Diplomatic Conference or by the meeting of the Contracting Parties, and the date of entry into force of the said amendments, in accordance with Article 32.

ARTICLE 35. AUTHENTIC TEXTS

The original of this Convention of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited with the Depositary, who shall send certified copies thereof to the Contracting Parties.

APPENDIX II

APPENDIX II TO GUIDELINES REGARDING THE REVIEW PROCESS UNDER THE CONVENTION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY (INFCIRC/571/REV.8) ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

PRESIDENT

*Roles and Responsibilities:*³

The President is expected to:

- A. Preside over plenary meetings;
- B. Generally direct and oversee the review process and the functioning of the Review Meeting;
- C. “Supervise” other Officers;
- D. Represent the Review Meeting to the media, as appropriate; and
- E. Prepare a proposed Summary Report of the Review Meeting and a President’s Report on the Review Meeting; and
- F. To make proposals to ensure continuation of the CNS process when an in-person meeting of the Contracting Parties cannot take place¹. The proposals should be drafted in consultation with the Vice-Presidents and the Secretariat for the Contracting Parties’ consideration and approval by consensus.

Qualifications:

It is desirable that the President possess the following qualifications:

- A. Have experience in chairing large international meetings;
- B. Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting;
- C. Be knowledgeable, either first hand or by being well-briefed, on the Convention on Nuclear Safety and its processes, and on some of the major current issues in the field of nuclear safety;
- D. Have good English-language skills; and

¹ An example of this experience is captured in the document “Summary of experience from managing CNS matters during the COVID-19 Pandemic”, which is uploaded on the CNS secure website.

E. Be skilled at facilitating consensus.

VICE-PRESIDENTS

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Vice-President may be expected to:

- A. Replace the President if and when necessary;
- B. Assist the President as appropriate; and
- C. Chair meetings of the groups and committees, as may be requested by the President.

Qualifications:

It is desirable that the Vice-President possess the following qualifications:

- A. Have experience in chairing large international meetings;
- B. Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting;
- C. Be knowledgeable, either first hand or by being well-briefed, on the Convention on Nuclear Safety and its processes, and on some of the major current issues in the field of nuclear safety;
- D. Have good English-language skills; and
- E. Be skilled at facilitating consensus.

COUNTRY GROUP CHAIRPERSONS

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Country Group Chairperson will be expected to:

- A. Chair and generally manage the meetings of the Country Group;
- B. Participate in meetings of the Plenary;
- C. Implement in the Country Group the decisions of the Plenary;
- D. Report on progress in the Country Group and on any organizational issues arising;
- E. Study the National Reports of the Country Group, in advance of their presentation;

- F. Be familiar with the main issues arising from the questions for each of these National Reports;
- G. Stimulate discussion of these issues in the Country Group sessions; and
- H. Support the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Country Review Reports and Rapporteur's Reports.

Qualifications:

It is desirable that the Country Group Chairperson possess the following qualifications:

- A. Have a demonstrated aptitude for encouraging the discussion of issues;
- B. Have good English-language skills;
- C. Be a good communicator;
- D. Be able to take guidance and direction from the President; and
- E. Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting.

COUNTRY GROUP VICE-CHAIRPERSONS

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Country Group Vice-Chairperson will be expected to:

- A. Replace the Country Group Chairperson in any of the duties of the chair, as needed; and
- B. Support the Rapporteur in the preparation of the Rapporteur's Reports

Qualifications:

It is desirable that the Country Group Vice-Chairperson possess the following qualifications:

- A. Have a demonstrated aptitude for encouraging the discussion of issues;
- B. Have good English-language skills;
- C. Be a good communicator;
- D. Have no vested interest, either personal or national, in countries in Country Group;
- E. Be able to take guidance and direction from the President; and
- F. Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting.

RAPPORTEURS***Roles and Responsibilities:***

The Rapporteur will be expected to:

- A. Be familiar with the National Reports to be presented in the Country Group and the Coordinator's analysis;
- B. Generally note the discussion of each of these National Reports in the Country Group sessions;
- C. Highlight topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be Good Practices;
- D. Highlight topics and issues that are agreed by the Country Group to be areas where follow-up at a subsequent Review Meeting would be desirable;
- E. Prepare before the Review Meeting a draft Country Review Report for each National Report of the Country Group members;
- F. Finalise the Country Review Reports after discussions in the Country Group;
- G. Produce and present to plenary a report that summarizes, on the basis of the Country Review Reports and in consultation with the Country Group Chair, the discussions that took place in the Country Group during the Review Meeting and their conclusions; and
- H. Produce the above reports in accordance with the format, timing, and other details as directed by the President and/or the General Committee.

Qualifications:

It is desirable that the Rapporteur possess the following qualifications:

- A. Have good English language skills;
- B. Be available for the duration of the Review Meeting;
- C. Have no vested interest, either personal or national, in countries in the Country Group;
- D. Have knowledge of internationally endorsed safety standards, regulatory practice and nuclear safety issues (in order to be able to recognize important parts of the discussion);
- E. Be able to summarize in writing succinctly and rapidly;
- F. Be tactful; and
- G. Be willing to work extended hours during the Review Meeting.

COORDINATORS

Roles and Responsibilities:

The Coordinator will be expected to:

- A. Sort all written questions and comments relating to National Reports of the Country Group into groups according to the Convention on Nuclear Safety's articles;
- B. Develop the major themes and issues arising from these questions and comments;
- C. Do the above with objectivity and in accordance with the prescribed timetables and in agreed formats to ensure consistency and to follow-up with National Contacts when they seem likely to miss deadlines; and
- D. Provide the Country Group Officers with the above analysis so that they are well-informed of the issues before the start of the Country Group's discussions.

Qualifications:

It is desirable that the Coordinator possess the following qualifications:

- A. Be available for extensive work periods for some months before the Review Meeting;
- B. Have knowledge of nuclear safety issues;
- C. Be familiar with electronic database manipulation; and
- D. Have good English-language skills.

NATIONAL CONTACTS

Roles and Responsibilities:

The National Contact will be nominated by each Contracting Party and will be expected:

- A. To have access to and regularly monitor the Convention secure and restricted database ("the Convention secure website"), together with the right to upload national documents, questions, and answers;
- B. To disseminate, nationally, information promulgated on the Convention secure website;
- C. To facilitate progress on issues related to the Convention in their own Member State;
- D. To act as contact for the Country Group Coordinator prior to each Review Meeting; and

E. To be invited to participate in the one-day meeting of incoming and outgoing Officers of the Convention, (“Officers’ turnover meeting”).

Qualifications:

It is desirable that the National Contact possess the following qualifications:

- A. Be available for contact between the Review Meetings;
- B. Have a knowledge of nuclear safety issues;
- C. Be familiar with electronic database management; and
- D. Have good English-language skills.

APPENDIX III

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

INFCIRC/872

DATE: 18 FEBRUARY 2015

GENERAL DISTRIBUTION

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

VIENNA DECLARATION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY

ON PRINCIPLES FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE OBJECTIVE OF THE CONVENTION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY TO PREVENT ACCIDENTS AND MITIGATE RADIOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

1. The Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety was adopted by the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS) meeting at the Diplomatic Conference to consider a Proposal to amend the CNS, which was held in Vienna on 9 February 2015. In the Declaration, the Contracting Parties to the CNS requested the Director General to publish the Declaration as an Information Circular for its widest dissemination including to States which are not Contracting Parties to the CNS, and the public in general.
2. In response to that request, the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety is circulated herewith.

CNS/DC/2015/2/Rev.1

February 9, 2015

Diplomatic Conference
to consider a proposal to amend the Convention on Nuclear Safety

Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety

On principles for the implementation of the objective of the Convention on Nuclear Safety to prevent accidents and mitigate radiological consequences

Adopted by the Contracting Parties meeting at the Diplomatic Conference of the Convention on Nuclear Safety

Vienna, Austria

9 February 2015

THE CONTRACTING PARTIES

TO

THE CONVENTION ON NUCLEAR SAFETY

- (i) ***taking into account*** the significant number of efforts and initiatives taken place after the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant on a national, regional and international level, to enhance nuclear safety;
- (ii) ***noting*** changes adopted in the Guidance Documents INFCIRC/571, 572 and 573 to strengthen the review process of the Convention on Nuclear Safety (hereinafter referred to as CNS);
- (iii) ***recalling*** the observations of the Contracting Parties of the CNS at the 2nd Extraordinary Meeting in 2012, confirmed at the 6th Review Meeting in 2014, that the displacement of people and the land contamination after a nuclear accident call for all national regulators

to identify provisions to prevent and mitigate the potential for severe accidents with off-site consequences;

- (iv) **reaffirming** the fundamental safety principles provided by the CNS and the commitment it entails to the continuous improvement of the implementation of these principles;
- (v) **aware of** the world-wide Action Plan on Nuclear Safety endorsed by all Member States of the International Atomic Energy Agency in September 2011; and,
- (vi) **having considered** the proposal by the Swiss Confederation to amend Article 18 of the CNS presented at the 6th Review Meeting of the CNS;

have adopted the following principles to guide them, as appropriate, in the implementation of the objective of the CNS to prevent accidents with radiological consequences and mitigate such consequences should they occur:

1. New nuclear power plants are to be designed, sited, and constructed, consistent with the objective of preventing accidents in the commissioning and operation and, should an accident occur, mitigating possible releases of radionuclides causing long-term off site contamination and avoiding early radioactive releases or radioactive releases large enough to require long-term protective measures and actions.
2. Comprehensive and systematic safety assessments are to be carried out periodically and regularly for existing installations throughout their lifetime in order to identify safety improvements that are oriented to meet the above objective. Reasonably practicable or achievable safety improvements are to be implemented in a timely manner.
3. National requirements and regulations for addressing this objective throughout the lifetime of nuclear power plants are to take into account the relevant IAEA Safety Standards and, as appropriate, other good practices as identified *inter alia* in the Review Meetings of the CNS.

The Contracting Parties to the CNS further decide that:

- (1) The agenda of the 7th Review Meeting of the CNS shall under its process include a peer review of the incorporation of appropriate technical criteria and standards used by Contracting Parties for addressing these principles in national requirements and regulations, which should lead the CNS to a process of consideration of key areas to be agreed at Review Meetings for subsequent Review Meetings.
- (2) With immediate effect, these principles should be reflected in the actions of Contracting Parties, in particular when preparing their reports on the implementation of the CNS, with special focus on Article 18 as well as other relevant Articles, including Articles 6,

14, 17 and 19, starting with the national reports to be submitted by Contracting Parties for consideration during the 7th Review Meeting of the CNS.

- (3) Each national report should include *inter alia* an overview of implementation measures, planned programs and measures for the safety improvements identified for existing nuclear installations.
- (4) Contracting Parties are committing to ensuring that the safety objectives set out above form an integral part of considerations during future Review Meetings and will be used as a reference to help strengthening the peer review process of the CNS.

The Contracting Parties to the CNS request the IAEA Director General to:

- a. ***transmit*** this Declaration to the IAEA Commission on Safety Standards for its consideration with the four safety standards committees under its aegis, of the technical elements contained therein with a view to incorporating them as appropriate into the relevant IAEA Safety Standards; and
- b. ***publish*** this Declaration as an INFCIRC for its widest dissemination including to States which are not Contracting Parties to the CNS, and the public in general.

For more information, please visit the CNS public website at:

<https://www.iaea.org/topics/nuclear-safety-conventions/convention-nuclear-safety>

or contact the CNS Coordinator at the Convention for Nuclear Safety
Contact Point: Convention-for-Nuclear-Safety.Contact-Point@iaea.org

