

Nuclear security of



- 1** Cuba is a leading hub for medical research and cancer treatment in Latin America and the Caribbean. Physical protection is installed at radiotherapy facilities to detect entry of and delay access to an intruder. This minimizes the likelihood of unauthorized access and maximizes nuclear security.



- 2** "Cuba is a developing country," explained Juan B. Sosa Marín, Colonel, Chief of the Ministry of the Interior's Dangerous Substances Department. "We want to demonstrate how even a small country can contribute to enhancing radioactive source security and, hence, minimize the threat posed by nuclear terrorism. We are confident that we have undertaken measures to strengthen our national nuclear security regime and to protect our tradition of excellence in medicine."



- 3** Security at oncology facilities is a high priority. High-activity radioactive cobalt-60 sources are vital for cancer treatment. Together with the IAEA, Cuba upgraded physical protection measures in nine medical facilities in order to secure the sources.



- 4** "Strong physical protection measures help us to limit access and make daily operations run smoothly. They also enable us to comply with regulations, which in turn provide confidence that our source is secure. Ultimately, we are able to provide uninterrupted treatment to even more patients because our source is secure", explained Dr Niurka Rodríguez Hernández.

Cuba's medical facilities



- 5** Cuba installed physical protection systems such as steel reinforced doors, motion sensors and cameras at six facilities outside Havana to delay unauthorized access to such a facility, detect any unauthorized movement, and ensure a timely response. The goal for Cuba is to increase security by decreasing the risk of theft or sabotage.



- 6** In close cooperation with Cuba, IAEA experts visit facilities to ensure that equipment is in place and functioning according to the agreed plan.



- 7** Improving the physical protection at facilities also contributes to improved radiation protection by limiting unauthorized access to controlled areas. In this regard, nuclear security shares the same objective with radiation safety to protect people from the harmful effects of ionizing radiation. This ensures that the source is used to the benefit of patients.



- 8** “Upgrades to our physical protection measures help to guarantee that no unauthorized person can access our sources. We can safely and securely treat our patients so that no harm can come to our community and our country can continue to advance,” Dr Rodríguez Hernández concluded.

Text: Danielle Dahlstrom; Photos: D. Calma/IAEA