

Main Outcomes From Participation to the 6th Review Meeting of Joint Convention on the Safety Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management

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1. Introduction

The Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (hereinafter referred to as ‘Joint Convention’) is the only international legally binding instrument to address, on a global scale, the safety of spent fuel (SF) and radioactive waste management (RWM). Since the Joint Convention was entered into force in 2001, it has contributed significantly to the safety of SF and RWM.

The 6th Review Meeting of the Joint Convention was held from 21 May to 01 June 2018 at the Headquarters of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), which is the depositary and Secretariat for the Joint Convention.

Since joining the Joint Convention in 2002, Korea has faithfully fulfilled the Contracting Party’s obligations.

This paper summarizes the steps, efforts made in preparation of the 6th Review Meeting and main outcomes of the Review Meeting.

2. Implementation of National Obligations for 6th Review Meeting of Joint Convention

2.1 Status of Joint Convention

The Convention was adopted on 5 September 1997 at a diplomatic conference convened by the IAEA Headquarter in Vienna. The Joint Convention was opened for signature on 29 September 1997, at the 41st regular session of the IAEA’s General Conference. The Joint Convention was entered into force on 2001[1].

The Contracting Parties should demonstrate commitment to apply stringent safety measures, to prepare a National Report on the applied measures and to submit it for review by all other Contracting Parties, as well as to actively participate in the Review Meetings of the Contracting Parties. The Joint Convention is an ‘incentive’ convention

through a peer review process every three years.

As of July 2018, there are 79 Contracting Parties[2].

2.2 Main Milestones for Implementation of National Obligation for 6th Review Meeting

The peer review process of Joint Convention is implemented based on following steps; 1) Submission of National Reports, 2) Questions and answers on the National Reports, 3) Participation to the Review Meeting.

Fig. 1 illustrates the main milestones for the 6th Review Meeting.

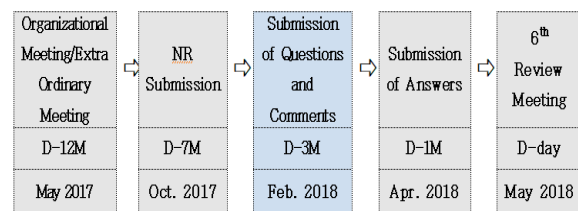


Fig. 1. Main milestones for the 6th Review Meeting.

2.3 Preparation of National Report

In order to fulfill the national obligations to the Joint Convention, a working level team composed of relevant organizations in nuclear industries including Nuclear Safety and Security Commission (NSSC), Korea Institute of Nuclear Safety (KINS), Korea Radioactive Waste Agency (KORAD), Korea Atomic Energy Research Institute (KAERI), Korea Hydro & Nuclear Power Co., Ltd (KHNP), Korea Electric Power Corporation Nuclear Fuel Co., Ltd (KEPCO NF) was organized to enhance the completeness of the implementation of the national obligations and to improve the efficiency of the implementation process by establishing a proper strategy before beginning each phase of obligatory matter.

In preparation of the 6th Review Meeting, the

National Report containing the implementation of national obligations and the good practices of the safe management of RW and SF in Korea was drafted in accordance with the “Guidelines Regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports (INFCIRC/604/Rev.3)” under the Joint Convention[3]. The National Report of Korea was submitted to the secretariat within the due date.

2.4 Question and Answer to the National Reports

The National Reports of 19 other Contracting Parties were reviewed to post the questions and comments, taking into account their significance on radioactive waste management facilities or program and the member of 8th Country Group(Lithuania, Canada, Georgia, Ghana, Morocco, Netherlands, and Uzbekistan). 158 questions and comments were submitted to the secretariat on timely fashion.

Afterward, Korea received a total number of 84 written questions/comments on the National Report of Korea from 18 Contracting Parties. The questions/comments on Korean report were focused on mainly following topics; LILW Predisposal, SF Public engagement and action plan, SF Management, HLW and LILW Disposal, Legislation and Regulatory Framework, etc. The answers to the questions/comments were submitted within the due date, on April 2018.

3. Participation to the 6th Review Meeting of Joint Convention and Main Outcomes

3.1 Presentation of National Report to 6th Review Meeting of JC

The National Report of Korea was presented at the 8th Country Group session on 23 May, 2018. The presentation of Korea highlighted the major changes since the 5th Review Meeting and safety improvement activities for RW and SF management, etc.

From the peer review process at 8th Country Group session, 1 Good Practice and 3 Area of Good Performances were identified for Korea as listed below, recognizing the efforts to enhance the safety of RWM;

- Good Practice: Establishment Nuclear Safety Consultative Council at each nuclear facility site
- Area of Good Performance; 1) Site selection

procedures and support for host community of HLW management facilities, 2) Establishment of safety requirements for HLW, and 3) Information disclosure and transparency activities.

At the 6th Review Meeting, the stricter application of the definition of “Good Practice” led to only 6 good practices being identified during the Country Group Sessions.

3.2 Main Outcomes from 6th Review Meeting of JC

The 6th Review Meeting identified that good progress is being made in many areas of SF and RW safety. Constructive discussions and sharing of knowledge took place in a frank and open manner and Contracting Parties recognized the importance of peer review process of the Joint Convention.

The Contracting Parties agreed to hold the 7th Review Meeting at IAEA Headquarters on 24 May to 4 June 2021.

4. Conclusion

Korea has committed to the objectives of Joint Convention and fully complied with the obligations and terms of the Joint Convention.

In preparation of the 6th Review Meeting, the national obligations were faithfully fulfilled by submitting the National Report and questions/answers within due date.

At the Country Group session of the Review Meeting, the efforts of Korea to enhance the safety of SF and RW management were recognized by other Contracting Parties.

Korea will continue to demonstrate its commitment to the Joint Convention through strengthening of national measures and international cooperation.

REFERENCES

- [1] www.IAEA.org, Joint Convention Brochure (2017).
- [2] www.IAEA.org, Latest Status of Signature and Ratification (2018).
- [3] INFCIRC/604/Rev.3, Guidelines Regarding the Form and Structure of National Reports (2014).