

Report of the G8 Nuclear Safety and Security Group (NSSG) during the United Kingdom's Presidency in 2013

Introduction

1. This is a report of the activities undertaken by the G8 Nuclear Safety and Security Group (NSSG) during the United Kingdom's Presidency of the G8 during 2013. This report aims to provide a high-level overview of the outcomes during 2013 and is therefore not a verbatim report on the discussions held. However, where possible this report does reflect the views and positions adopted by the G8 membership and the G8 as a whole.

Summary/Highlights

2. The G8 NSSG is in full agreement that the NSSG continues to serve a useful purpose in co-ordinating the efforts of the G8 in addressing key nuclear safety and security issues.
3. During the UK Presidency the NSSG significantly furthered the work of the international community on Emergency Preparedness and Response (EP&R). In particular, the G8 States delivered several key examples of increased international practical cooperation, in close collaboration with the IAEA.
4. The G8 States co-ordinated their support for evidence based and proportionate measures to strengthen the Convention on Nuclear Safety process as proposed by the Convention on Nuclear Safety Efficiency and Transparency Working Group. It was also agreed that this co-ordination of support will continue during the discussions at the 6th Review Meeting of the Convention in 2014.
5. Also to specifically be welcomed is the commitment of the G8 States to provide the IAEA with progress reports on the implementation of the IAEA Action Plan for nuclear safety. By taking this leadership role the G8 aim to contribute to the continued momentum in strengthening nuclear safety and emergency preparedness and response across the globe.

Attendance/Meeting dates

6. Under the Presidency of the United Kingdom the G8 NSSG met three times in London. The meetings were held on the 13th and 14th of March 2013, the 2nd and 3rd of May 2013 and the 30th and 31st of October 2013. Meetings were chaired by the United Kingdom and were attended by Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Russian Federation and the United States of America. Additionally the IAEA Secretariat, the European Commission and the EBRD attended the meetings and participated in the discussions.

Focus of the NSSG under the UK Presidency

7. The objectives for the NSSG under the UK's Presidency were:
 - To continue the work delineated in the IAEA Action Plan with a focus on the commitment to seeking continuous improvement of nuclear safety.
 - To strengthen international practical cooperation on nuclear emergency preparedness and response, working closely with the IAEA.
 - To coordinate the G8 position on the outcome of the Extra-ordinary Meeting of the CNS in August 2012.
8. In addition to the main objectives of the UK Presidency the NSSG also received updates and discussed the on-going activities of the IAEA in delivering the IAEA Action Plan on nuclear safety, progress with the work managed by the EBRD in relation to the Chernobyl site and from the European Commission on activities in relation to action taken at the European Community level.

Outcomes

Emergency Preparedness and Response

9. The G8 States have focused on strengthening international coordination on EP&R, working closely with the IAEA, and have made strong progress in this area. Specific deliverables during 2013 include:
 - a. UK side event on EP&R and security at the IAEA General Conference, opened by UK Minister Baroness Verma and including speakers from UK, US, Canada and IAEA.
 - b. Increased membership of the IAEA's global assistance mechanism, RANET. All but one G8 State has now registered capabilities in RANET. The G8 States are supporting the IAEA to further strengthen RANET's existing functions. Many other States are considering registering further capabilities. Also, the G8 States contributed to the revision of the RANET manual (EPR-RANET 2013), which took effect on the 1st of September 2013.

- c. Strong support - technical and financial - for IAEA's comprehensive report on the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident with excellent representation from G8 States on IAEA's working groups for the report, to be published in 2014.
- d. Participation of G8 States in IAEA's international exercise in ConvEx in November 2013.
- e. Observation of each other's domestic exercises to share best practice (e.g. UK and France).
- f. Capacity building - including conference sessions on EP&R (Canada), international training packages (US), designation of the IAEA RANET Capacity Building Centre in Fukushima prefecture in May 2013 and RANET workshops held at the centre (Japan), new IAEA capacity building centre (US), nuclear safety and security network activities (Germany, US, EC).

Convention on Nuclear Safety Efficiency and Transparency Working Group – co-ordination of G8 support

10. The G8 States continued to play an active role in the Convention on Nuclear Safety Efficiency and Transparency Working Group (the 'E&T Working Group') and had provided significant support to the delivery of its aims (G8 State representatives held the role of Vice-Chair of the Working Group and had also provided five of the seven area co-ordinators).
11. The NSSG considered the work of the E&T Working Group to identify whether the G8 States could lend their collective support to the proposals so as to increase their chances of adoption at the 6th Review Meeting in 2014.
12. Over the three meetings of the NSSG, the 14 working papers and the 68 proposed actions developed by the E&T Working Group were considered so as to identify any areas where there was a common position among the G8 States. As a result, the G8 shared the common intention to support the objective of strengthening the implementation processes of the Convention through further amendments to the guidance documents and also to support in principle the gathering of information and evidence through the delivery of the actions/recommendations to other bodies.
13. On the remaining actions it was agreed that the G8 States should either support or oppose the various actions according to their national preference. However, in relation to the proposed voluntary measures it was decided that the G8 would not oppose them or seek to prevent other Contracting Parties from taking the proposed voluntary measures.

14. As the final meeting of the G8 NSSG under the UK Presidency took place before the final meeting of the E&T Working Group, and therefore prior to the finalisation of the E&T Working Group's report, the UK continued to co-ordinate the joint G8 position via correspondence. It was also agreed that the Russian Federation, during their Presidency in 2014, would continue to co-ordinate G8 positions should the need arise. It was also suggested by the US, after the last meeting of the NSSG, that some of the actions/recommendations to other bodies would need further development before they could be jointly sponsored by the US. The development of the final package of measures to be jointly sponsored by the G8 States was therefore still underway at the end of the UK Presidency in 2013.

Chernobyl/EBRD

15. The NSSG received updates from the EBRD on progress on the Chernobyl New Safe Confinement (NSC) and other projects delivered through the EBRD-managed Chernobyl Shelter Fund (CSF) and the Interim Storage Facility-2 (ISF-2) and other projects at Chernobyl delivered through the EBRD-managed Nuclear Safety Account (NSA), to both of which G8 members have been major contributors.

16. The NSSG welcomed progress on the projects, notably the raising of arch assemblies for the NSC. The NSSG expressed concern, however, that analysis indicated that the funds pledged by donors, up to and including at the 2011 Chernobyl Pledging Conference, would not be sufficient to complete the full scope of works envisaged in the Shelter Implementation Plan (SIP), and that major project completion dates, including for the NSC and ISF-2, looked likely not to be met. More specifically the G8 NSSG Members expressed their grave disappointment that despite seeking assurances, via the EBRD, that the Chernobyl project management team and contractors would stay within the budget agreed (in July 2010) that there had been a severe escalation in projected costs and significant delays in delivery of the project aims.

17. It was noted that the 2011 pledges had been made by G8 Members (and other donors) under the understanding by the leaders that there would be no further requests for funds from current donors.

18. The NSSG agreed the need for a full and transparent analysis that provides reliable data on the projected spending, and the actions taken or to be taken to manage the costs, for the completion of the project. This information needs to be provided to the donors in time to allow the consideration, at the appropriate level, of any further measures which might be called for to support the conversion of the destroyed reactor site into a stable and environmentally safe state. The CSF and NSA Assemblies of Contributors on 13 December 2013 will have to address the issue.

IAEA Action Plan

19. The NSSG received regular updates from the IAEA on the progress made in delivering the objectives of the IAEA Action Plan. The IAEA highlighted the need for action by the IAEA Secretariat, Member States, Regulators and operators to ensure that the objective of improving nuclear safety in light of the lessons learned from the Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Station accident were met.
20. While the progress made by the IAEA was welcomed by the NSSG it was agreed that there was a greater role for the G8 to play in terms of showing leadership. It was noted that at the time of the March 2013 meeting of the NSSG that only the Russian Federation and France had thus far provided the IAEA with a progress report on the actions they have taken.
21. It was therefore agreed that G8 States, that had not already done so, would provide the IAEA Secretariat with an update on progress with the implementation of the relevant actions in the IAEA Action Plan at the earliest opportunity. The UK, Italy and Canada had submitted their report to the IAEA by October 2013. The remaining G8 States were aiming to submit their reports by the end of 2013.

Forward Look

22. Three meetings of the Nuclear Safety and Security Group are planned during the Russian G-8 Presidency in 2014: February 26-27 (Moscow); April 28-29 (Saint Petersburg); October 27-28 (Moscow). The third meeting will be followed by the International IAEA Workshop "Lessons Learned from the IRRS" scheduled for October 29-31.
23. Taking into account the general principle of continuity between Presidencies the Russian Federation's Presidency during 2014 will focus on:
 - Implementation of Chernobyl on-site projects administrated by EBRD;
 - Implementation of the IAEA Action Plan on Nuclear Safety;
 - Emergency preparedness and response.
24. Additionally, the Russian Federation proposes the G8 NSSG considers aspects of the remediation of the areas affected by the implementation of nuclear energy programmes. This topic is on line with the aims of the UK Presidency's work on emergency preparedness and response arrangements during 2013. In support of this work the IAEA Workshop on Regulatory Control on Nuclear Legacy Sites will be held in Moscow on November 26-28. The scope of the workshop may include sites affected by radiological accidents.
25. The G-8 Summit will be held in Sochi on June 4-5 at it is the aim of the Russian Presidency to ensure that the Heads of States' Summary report includes reference to the important work of the NSSG.