

Session 2: Intersection between Nuclear Safety and Nuclear Security

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Summary

Dr. Dalnoki-Veress opened the panel noting that nuclear safety and security can often be at odds because they face different goals. After a nuclear emergency, responders are tasked with saving lives. However, in man-made emergencies, law enforcement needs to preserve a crime scene for forensic evidence. He noted that increased training activities, would allow each field to become aware of the unique challenges faced during any nuclear crisis (accidental or man-made). He also noted government transparency with the public, in order to maintain trust, is paramount. Public health officials play an important role in communicating important information, and must consider the needs of diverse groups following a crisis. Finally, there needs to be greater attention to anticipating how the public will realistically act in a crisis. Planners must incorporate a realistic, design-based all-hazards approach to improve their planning strategies.

Dr. Findlay contrasted nuclear safety and security regimes. The IAEA grounds both, but whereas the nuclear safety regime is well-established, elaborate, and incorporates many legal instruments, the security regime evolved separately, is younger, not as elaborate, and has fewer legal mechanisms. The IAEA currently offers many programs for advising/assisting states on safety issues, yet lacks similar programs dedicated to nuclear security. Cooperation between the two regimes is challenged by a lack of information-sharing and formal collaboration. He recommended increased awareness-raising and peer-review around planning for potential emergencies. He finally noted that the IAEA is crucial for enmeshing and breaking barriers between these two regimes, while maintaining appropriate confidentialities.

Dr. Choong-hee Hahn concentrated on the interface between safety and security in preparation for the 2012 Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul. One new focus for this summit will be how the Fukushima crisis may have provided terrorists' hints facility sabotage may be a feasible strategy. He foresees safety discussions on such scenarios imperative, but that safety concerns should not obscure the summits' main purpose. Rather, there needs to be a coordination and positive synergy to integrate the two fields. He posited that the IAEA should undertake a profound and thorough review of the fields to uncover important interface mechanisms. Professional research and dialogue prior to the Summit will also demonstrate to the public a high-level commitment to improving and reinforcing nuclear safety and security systems.

Dr. Howsley stated that South Korea has a timely role during the 2012 Summit in shaping future policy agendas. He surmises that security should be the focus, but the discussions must also address challenges at the safety and security interface. He emphasized the need to develop practical 'best-practices' guidelines for the fields. He acknowledged a lack of transparency and trust between safety and security as an important challenge to address. He noted a recent WINS report (May 2011) that focused upon lessons emerging from the Fukushima crisis could serve as a starting point for addressing these challenges. He concluded that the time is right for changes in attitudes and policies concerning nuclear safety and security, and looks forward to the 2012 Summit as a start in this direction.

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