

The International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation
Joint Statement
8th Executive Committee Meeting
Paris, France
9 November 2017

The Executive Committee of the International Framework for Nuclear Energy Cooperation (IFNEC) held its annual meeting on 9 November 2017, in Paris, France. Senior representatives from 21 Participant countries, 4 Observer countries and 4 observer organizations met to discuss IFNEC-related matters and expressed to the Republic of France their sincere appreciation for graciously chairing this year's Executive Committee Meeting. They also expressed their appreciation to the NEA for hosting the meetings of the IFNEC Steering Group, the Infrastructure Development Working Group (IDWG), Reliable Nuclear Fuel Services Working Group (RNFSWG) and the IFNEC "Global Supply Chain and Localization, Issues and Opportunities: A Conference on the Customer Dialogue" on 7-8 November 2017.

The mission of IFNEC is to provide a forum for cooperation among participating states to explore mutually beneficial approaches to ensure the use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes proceeds in a manner that is efficient and meets the highest standards of safety, security and non-proliferation. Participating states would not give up any rights and voluntarily engage to share the effort and gain the benefits of economical, peaceful nuclear energy.

The Executive Committee recognizes the key role nuclear energy is playing for many countries throughout the world as a reliable, resilient, clean, and long-term source of electricity production, and the potential it has to increase its contribution in this regard based on nuclear power plant and fuel cycle technology improvements. The Executive Committee also noted the challenges to improve cost efficiency of using nuclear energy in an increasingly competitive market.

The Executive Committee encourages 34 Participant Countries comprising IFNEC, as well as 31 Observer Countries and 4 International Observer Organizations (IAEA, OECD/NEA, Euratom, Generation IV International Forum) to continue working together in mutually beneficial ways including information sharing, lessons-learned, and synergistic non-duplicative ways to work with the IAEA and OECD/NEA.

The Executive Committee supports IFNEC's current areas of focus, including the relationship between nuclear supplier and customer countries; the financing of nuclear power projects; optimizing electricity market structures; establishing the necessary infrastructure including the requisite skilled workforce; global supply chain issues; broadening the choice of reactor designs to include for instance small modular reactors; further study of multinational spent nuclear fuel disposal solutions and other possibilities; and enhancing stakeholder engagement to collectively and more effectively address common global nuclear supplier and customer challenges.

The Executive Committee takes positive note of the following recent activities organized or co-hosted by IFNEC, intended to address the above-described challenges and opportunities:

- The Resources and Gaps Workshop: Industry view of nuclear security/ Stakeholder Engagement for Radioactive Waste Management organized by the IDWG and hosted by Romania, May 2017;

as well as the following meetings hosted by the NEA in Paris, France:

- The IDWG, RNFSWG, Ad Hoc Nuclear Supplier and Customer Countries Engagement Group meetings (NSCCEG) in June 2017;

- The Steering Group meeting in June, 2017;
- The IDWG and RNFSWG meetings in November 2017;
- The Global Supply Chain and Localization, Issues and Opportunities: A Conference on the Customer Dialogue, organized by the Ad Hoc Group in November 2017;
- And the Steering Group meeting in November 2017.

The Executive Committee notes with pleasure the successful transition of the Steering Group Chair. After many years chairing the Steering Group, Mr. Edward McGinnis passed this function to Mr. Julián Gadano, who will chair the Steering Group for the coming years and offer support to the activities carried out by the Working Groups. The Executive Committee recognizes the valuable work done by Mr. Edward McGinnis and nominates him as Chair Emeritus of the Steering Group.

The Executive Committee recognizes the work of the newly-created Ad Hoc Group, NSCCEG, which started its activities after the last Executive Committee, held in Buenos Aires, October 2016. The Ad Hoc Group implemented an intensive program, focusing on the relation between nuclear supplier and customer countries, possible areas of cooperation and interaction, and opportunities for offering its services to improve the relationship between supplier and customer countries. The NSCCEG organized the event “Global Supply Chain and Localization, Issues and Opportunities: A Conference on the Customer Dialogue” in Paris, 7-8 November 2017, which provided IFNEC with a comprehensive understanding of supplier and customer relationships. The Executive Committee notes the success of the conference and the interest expressed by several Participant countries in continuing to address the issues described in the NSCCEG’s Terms of Reference.

The Executive Committee recognizes the positive work of the Steering Group Chair and the Co-chairs of the RNFSWG, IDWG and Ad Hoc Group, all of whom accomplished a broad array of beneficial activities during the last period. The Executive Committee commends the Steering Group and Working Groups for their excellent work and expressed its particular appreciation for their accomplishments in addressing issues identified as being of key importance by Participant countries. The Executive Committee is very grateful for support provided by the Nuclear Energy Agency as the Technical Secretariat for IFNEC. In connection with this, the Executive Committee extends its sincere appreciation:

- To the IFNEC Technical Secretariat at the NEA for successfully organizing and hosting the Steering Group and Working Groups meetings in June and November 2017; for preparing the report on the 2016 Annual Survey which reflects the views of the IFNEC Participant countries and identifies future steps and strategies; and to NEA Director-General William D. Magwood, IV, for his personal involvement and efforts supporting and encouraging the work of IFNEC.
- To the Government of Romania and to the IDWG for co-organizing the Resources and Gaps Workshop: Industry view of Nuclear Security/ Stakeholder Engagement for Radioactive Waste Management, in May 2017.
- To Mr. Edward McGinnis for his outstanding guidance since the very beginning of IFNEC.
- To Mr. Alan Brownstein for his leadership and service to the RNFSWG.
- To Mr. Julián Gadano for his agreement to chair the Steering Group and his readiness to bring new ideas to be tackled by IFNEC.
- To the incoming leadership for its willingness to serve: Mr. Sean Tyson as RNFSWG co-Chair, Mr. Hideo Shindo and Mr. Rafael Grossi as co-Chairs of the Ad Hoc Nuclear Supplier

and Customer Engagement Group.

- To the Participant countries that have provided voluntary contributions to allow the IFNEC Technical Secretariat to operate successfully and provide to Working Group co-chairs multi-faceted analysis, support, and publication of findings to the extent funding is available. To those Participant countries and observer countries and organizations that have provided robust participation in IFNEC activities and in-kind contributions, such as hosting Executive Committee and other meetings; volunteering experts into leadership or participant roles; or otherwise providing IFNEC with time and ideas in developing meaningful undertakings.

In particular, the Executive Committee notes with satisfaction the following:

- An effort across the years to address the infrastructure challenges from its roots, and offer solutions to nuclear newcomer countries.
- The continued effort to explore the possibility and technicalities of a multinational repository for final disposition of medium and high level radioactive waste.

The Executive Committee indicates its priorities for IFNEC activities and issues the following guidance for the Steering Group and Working Groups to pursue through 2018:

- The Steering Group will coordinate the work to avoid overlapping activities and improve synergies among Working Groups and to strengthen the relationship with other related agencies. To this effect, it will update the “Action Plan” document that describes the Terms of Reference of the Working Groups and the Technical Secretariat and more generally, the governance structure and operating procedures of IFNEC.
- The Executive Committee agrees to renew the mandate of the Ad Hoc Nuclear Supplier and Customer Engagement Group for a second year, with the objective to continue to address the issues listed in the group’s Terms of Reference.
- The Executive Committee recognizes the progress made in the Reliable Nuclear Fuel Services Working Group activity. The Co-chairs of the RNFSWG are directed to continue their focus on the back end of the nuclear fuel cycle to explore cooperative approaches to the management of radioactive waste and spent nuclear fuel that will benefit Participant countries. Furthermore the Executive Committee directs the Group to continue work on the development of the Multinational Repository concept and the Dual track Approach to national back-end programs. RNFSWG is encouraged to consider sponsoring a workshop or conference for 2018 to develop a specific topic of interest.
- The IDWG should continue to address important issues in developing the national infrastructure countries require for safe and secure pursuit of a nuclear energy program, including human resource development and nuclear regulatory development. The Executive Committee recognizes the work done over the past year by the IDWG in the areas of nuclear security, reactor decommissioning, decommissioning and remediation of damaged nuclear facilities, human resource development, stakeholder involvement, small modular reactors, nuclear safety and emergency preparedness and response. The Executive Committee is encouraged to hear of the continued collaboration with the IAEA and in particular, welcomes the co-sponsorship of an international student competition on projects to provide discussion and increase awareness around nuclear science and technology in local communities. The Executive Committee welcomes the intention of the IDWG to hold a meeting which will cover regulatory approaches to new reactor technologies.

- The RNFSWG, IDWG and NSCCEG are urged to continue technical collaboration in their activities with the IAEA and the OECD/NEA, and other organizations as appropriate.
- The Steering Group is urged to take actions to address financing challenges to support IFNEC activities as well as to develop outreach activities for potential new Participant Countries, taking into account the voluntary nature of financial contributions to the secretariat budget.
- The Steering Group, in coordination with the Working Group co-chairs, is encouraged to identify a topic of significant importance to international cooperation on nuclear energy and to plan and conduct a workshop or conference with broad stakeholder interest.

The Executive Committee encourages all IFNEC Participant and Observer countries to participate actively in the IFNEC Steering Group and Working Group meetings scheduled in Q2 2018, as well as in the Executive Committee meeting that Japan offers to host in Q4 2018, subject to budgetary approval.