

# “2016 Study Panel” of the FNCA

## Summary Report by the Cabinet Office of Japan

The “2016 Study Panel” (2016-SP) of the Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA) was held on March 10, 2016 in Tokyo, hosted by the Cabinet Office of Japan (CAO) and the Japan Atomic Energy Commission (JAEC). The participants included the representatives of 11 countries (Australia, Bangladesh, China, Indonesia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Philippines, Thailand, Vietnam), as well as those invited from IAEA and OECD/NEA.

### **1. Background**

With the growing concern on the energy security and global warming, FNCA member countries’ awareness increased as to the value of nuclear energy that could effectively cope with the twin challenges of ensuring reliable energy supplies and curbing greenhouse gas emissions. Study Panels have been annually held since 2004 and effectively served as a venue to discuss opportunities and challenges of nuclear power development.

Following the UN Sustainable Development Summit and the 21th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP21) held in 2015, the 16th FNCA Ministerial Level Meeting (MLM) was held in Tokyo in December of the same year and discussed inter alia the theme of “Climatic change and the role of nuclear power,” and FNCA’s possible contributions in that regard. The 2016-SP was held in line with the decisions of the 16<sup>th</sup> FNCA MLM to reinforce the activities related to building public trust in nuclear science and technology.

### **2. Objective of the meeting**

Stakeholder involvement is a challenge that the participating countries commonly face as they promote nuclear power programs. Discussion and information exchange under the theme of “Building trust toward nuclear technology through stakeholder engagement, and improved communication with the public.” for drawing lessons learned from the past experiences and identify the best practices in this area was the purpose of the meeting.

### 3. Overview

- The OECD/NEA representative gave a presentation on the Agency's diverse activities and undertakings in the area of stakeholder involvement. The IAEA representative gave a lecture on the informative basics of stakeholder involvement. Both served as a good introduction to the discussion that took place in the succeeding sessions of the day.
- The participants, who represented Asian countries where energy needs are rapidly growing, had learnt important issues and viewpoints that they need to consider when they introduce or expand nuclear power generation.
- The participants shared valuable information and experiences on how electric power companies gained to build a relationship based on trust with local residents in the neighborhood of nuclear power stations and facilities.
- Australian representative reported their successful experience in the stakeholder involvement regarding nuclear facilities and low level radioactive waste disposal, which suggested that the maintenance of close contacts and continuing communication through ordinary daily life are important.

### 4. Contents of the meeting

#### 4.1 Keynote speeches

(1) The OECD/NEA representative introduced the Agency's organization and presented the diverse activities relating to public communication and stakeholder engagement at the different stages of the nuclear fuel cycle. Due to the importance of the matter, a new Division of Human Aspects of Nuclear Safety has been established to work closely with all NEA committees and relevant expert groups in this area, most prevalently, the Committee on the Safety of Nuclear Installations (CSNI), the Committee on Nuclear Regulatory Activities (CNRA), the Radioactive Waste Management Committee (RWMC), the Committee on Radiation Protection and Public Health (CRPPH) and the Nuclear Law Committee (NLC). The OECD/NEA representative reported on the activities of the Working Group on Public Communication of Nuclear Regulatory Organisations (WGPC) and the RWMC Forum on Stakeholder Confidence (FSC), as well as

recent publications and future activities (such as the WGPC Asian stakeholders workshop to be held in Tokyo in April 2016 and the NEA Workshop on Stakeholder Involvement in Nuclear Decision-Making to be held in Paris in January 2017<sup>1</sup>). OECD/NEA welcomed the FNCA countries' awareness of this key area and highlighted again the Agency's interest in working with the FNCA countries on public and stakeholder engagement.

(2) The IAEA representative explained the outline of stakeholder involvement referring to the 19 issues<sup>2</sup> in the development of national infrastructure for nuclear power that IAEA Milestone Approach defines. She also highlighted six principles of stakeholder involvement that are described in the IAEA's publication, "Stakeholder Involvement Throughout the Life Cycle of Nuclear Facilities.

#### **4.2 Stakeholder involvement relating to a plan for establishing nuclear facilities**

- A member of The Committee for Securing Transparency of Kashiwazaki-Kariwa Nuclear Power Station presented its history of activities over 13 years to find a practical solution to coexist with nuclear facilities in the neighborhood.
- A Fukui Prefecture representative presented its successful initiatives for hosting nuclear power facilities and promoting regional development, under the three principles of "Ensure safety," "Obtain local residents' understanding and consent," and "Keep ever-lasting benefits of the communities."
- A representative of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organization (ANSTO) presented its successful public relation strategy stressing "the benefits of nuclear science and technology" in the fields of medical, environment, and industry, in order to reinforce to the public the utility of nuclear applications to society.

#### **4.3 Stakeholder involvement relating to low-level radioactive waste**

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<sup>1</sup> Since the FNCA Study Panel, the date of this workshop was moved to 17-19 January 2017.

<sup>2</sup> "19" infrastructure issues are National position, Nuclear safety, Management, Funding and financing, Legal framework, Safeguards, Regulatory framework, Radiation protection, Electric grid, Human resource development, Stakeholder involvement, site and supporting facilities, Environmental protection, Emergency planning, Nuclear security, Nuclear fuel cycle, Radioactive waste management, Industrial involvement and Procurement.

- An ANSTO representative reported its successful experience in stakeholder engagement that was conducted over five years to obtain public's understandings to the return of waste after reprocessing in France.
- A Japan Nuclear Fuel Limited representative presented their initiatives that were taken over 30 years for living in harmony with local communities in the neighborhood of the nuclear fuel cycle facilities.

#### **4.4 The first restart of nuclear power station after two years of no operational nuclear station in Japan**

- A Kyushu Electric Power Co., Inc. representative presented their activities on the promotion of understanding toward restarting the Sendai Nuclear Power Station.

### **5. Lessons learnt from the meeting**

- “Stakeholders” should be considered broadly to include all those who feel they might be impacted.
- The European Union (EU) member countries must carry out environmental impact assessments for certain nuclear-related activities and consult each other, as well as the public, pursuant to the Espoo Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context and European law. The purpose of the Espoo Convention is to enhance international co-operation and allow environmentally sound decisions to be made by consulting neighboring countries. The EU member countries must also disclose information to the public pursuant to the Aarhus Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters grants the public the right to request access to any environmental information held by public authorities, in whatever form. It was acknowledged that not only nationals of a country developing nuclear power could feel concerned, but also nationals from neighboring countries, therefore Asian countries may want to also take into account their neighboring countries when developing nuclear power projects in the future.
- It was recognized that the establishment of a legal framework is essential. It was also recognized that the key to successful promotion of nuclear power is building a good relationship with local communities.

- As the presentation given by the representative of Australia suggests, widely communicating the benefits of nuclear science and technology can effectively contribute to better public acceptance.

## **6 . Possible follow-up actions**

- While the FNCA member countries need to further discuss possible follow-up actions from 2016-SP, the following are possible actions which outcomes would be beneficial to member countries.
- If the FNCA and the OECD/NEA cooperate on nuclear law matters, the OECD/NEA can bring its experience to organize meetings and to encourage FNCA member countries to exchange information and work on a common goal. Meetings could be held on a yearly basis and each meeting could address a specific nuclear law topic. The first meeting could focus on nuclear liability, but other topics may subsequently be addressed like the legal framework of public and stakeholder engagement or of nuclear safety.
- If the IAEA can support the FNCA in the area of stakeholder-involvement. There is variety of IAEA support for MS's, through technical meetings, expert missions, publications and e-learning.
- These possible follow-up actions will be discussed during the SOM and other meeting of the FNCA.

Attachment:

1. “ FNCA 2016 Study Panel “ Agenda
2. List of the Participants in FNCA 2016 Study Panel (10 March, 2016)

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