

Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA)
Joint Communiqué on the New Direction of the FNCA
adopted at the 24th Ministerial Level Meeting (MLM),
November 28, 2023

We, the heads of delegation of countries participating in the FNCA: the Commonwealth of Australia, the People's Republic of Bangladesh, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Kazakhstan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, the Republic of the Philippines, the Kingdom of Thailand and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam,

Recalling that the FNCA's objective is to promote social and economic development through active regional partnerships for the peaceful and safe utilization of nuclear technology, and that R&D, knowledge, information sharing, and capacity building are, inter alia, the main roles and activities of the FNCA, which will lead to social and economic well-being of the member countries,

Noting the potential value of nuclear energy, which can contribute to energy mix solutions, and to reducing and/or avoiding emissions of greenhouse gas,

Acknowledging the importance of securing required human resources in the nuclear science and technology field, and radiation utilization field and the importance of succession of knowledge, including through promoting gender balance and gender equity, as well as attracting younger generation/diverse professionals,

Sharing significance of developing activities related to "Contribution of nuclear science in human health and medical welfare," through discussions at the MLM,

Welcoming Singapore's participation in the MLM as an observer, hoping FNCA will become a forum open to those who wish to join,

Taking into account that FNCA will mark the 25th anniversary of its founding, confirming that member countries will collaborate on commemorative events,

Recognizing value of radiation use and related FNCA projects in areas such as sustainable agricultural development, food safety, eco-friendly industrial development, mitigation of the effects

of climate change, and conservation of natural ecosystems,

Noting usefulness of the newly decided project at CDM in June, 2023, on tackling climate change, and potential future availability of newly proposed project on performance management program (PMP) of research reactors,

Highly appreciating the fact that after the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic, FNCA projects have been reactivated through hybrid meetings applying in-person and online methods, confirming progress of FNCA activities in agriculture, industry, medicine, analysis and environment,

Noting the need for reinforcing cooperation among the member countries in the related field, acknowledged through the discussion on “Outlook on next generation reactors including SMR” at June 2023 Study Panel,

Confirming that the topic for the 2024 Study Panel is “Production and demand of medical radioisotope”,

Sharing the idea of the initiative “Rays of Hope” launched by IAEA in February 2022 to support establishing and expanding cancer therapy by radiation (cancer care for all), and recognizing the importance of cooperation between FNCA and nuclear-related international organizations such as IAEA, OECD/NEA and IFNEC, having agreed to put in perspective potential cooperation/collaboration with such bodies,

Have decided to work towards:

1. Future cooperation between the FNCA and the IAEA in the area of human health

Anticipating that the IAEA will make necessary coordination with the relevant international organizations including the WHO and FAO without duplicating existing mandates in combating zoonotic diseases, explore possible collaboration between the FNCA and the IAEA on the ZODIAC project in the future,

Seek future cooperation between the IAEA and the FNCA on “Rays of Hope” project, expecting that protocols for cancer treatment to be established by the relevant project of FNCA could be put to full use in the “Rays of Hope” framework.

2. Promotion of cancer treatments with radiation technology

Based on each member country's policy to facilitate cancer treatment including palliative cares in Asia, or enhancing such activities, promote effort for radiation oncology in Asian region under leadership of project leaders, in order to further activate FNCA's radiation oncology project.

Enhance and continue initiatives to advance and disseminate innovative radiation therapy technology with related international organizations.

3. Cooperate in addressing issues of environmental protection and countermeasures to climate change

In view of frequent occurrence of extreme weather worldwide in recent years, encourage the member countries to reinforce their policies on environmental protection, scientific investigation and measures against climate change, and to continuously promote cooperation toward the issues. The use of the nuclear technology and research development can be helpful in this effort.

4. Share information on next generation reactors including SMR

In accordance with the discussion on "The Outlook of Next Generation Reactor including SMR, at the 2023 Study Panel, promote information exchange with related issues, and in order to share development status on new type reactors among member countries, put importance on information exchange about potentialities and outlook on technical, safety, and economic aspects.

5. Spread of the R&D results

Encourage the member countries to facilitate uses of the outcomes of projects on mutation breeding, radiation processing, research reactor utilization, isotope production and neutron activation analysis and so on, by end-users, taking into account the possibility of their commercialization, which can more effectively contribute to the member countries' socio-economic well-being,

6. Sustainable agriculture development and food safety, environmental protection, medical care and human health, nuclear safety and security culture

Continue to expand our activities in the application fields of nuclear science and technology and radiation utilization related to the development of sustainable agriculture and food safety, environmental protection, medicine, and the development of infrastructure for nuclear safety and conservation culture. In doing so, we will promote existing research and development fields, and with an eye to the future, proactively adopt research and development fields that are of broad interest to member countries and that contribute to sustainable development.

7. Cooperation in Human Resource Development (HRD) of the nuclear science and technology field, and radiation use

Depending on the needs and circumstances of each member country, we will hold face-to-face seminars and workshops, as well as webinars and online workshops, on initiatives related to systematic personnel exchange and enhancement of human resources infrastructure, so that we can promote information exchange. Diversity in participation, leadership and representation in FNCA projects and activities is important. We will seek to achieve gender equality in the nuclear science and technology field, including through promoting gender balance and age diversity in the workforces. We will report disaggregated data, including by gender and age, to assist our implementation.

8. Expanding public communication and public relations functions

Continuously work on building up public trust on nuclear science and technology in the member countries and the Asian region, and endeavor to expand public relations functions through FNCA website and open lectures held in the member states, and enhance cooperation with relevant international organizations such as IAEA, OECD/NEA and IFNEC,

9. Other items

1) Response to new participation in FNCA

In the future, if any countries wish to join the FNCA, we will ensure smooth communication between member countries and make effort to promptly build consensus.

2) Towards FNCA's 25th anniversary

FNCA will celebrate its 25th anniversary in 2024. In preparation for the milestone jubilee, we will prepare significant programs and events related to FNCA's activities in cooperation among member countries.