



MEDIA

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Dear Editor

A SIGNIFICANT ACHIEVEMENT FOR SOUTH AFRICA IN THE GLOBAL NUCLEAR LANDSCAPE. NATIONAL NUCLEAR REGULATOR (NNR) CEO DR BISMARCK TYOBeka ELECTED TO PRESIDENT OF THE SIXTH REVIEW MEETING OF THE CONTRACTING PARTIES UNDER THE JOINT CONVENTION ON THE SAFETY OF SPENT NUCLEAR FUEL MANAGEMENT AND SAFETY OF RADIOACTIVE WASTE MANAGEMENT.

- 23 May 2017, Centurion, Pretoria, South Africa –

On Thursday 18 May 2017, the NNR CEO, Dr Bismark Tyobeka was elected by Contracting Parties to serve as President of the Sixth Review Meeting of the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Nuclear Fuel Management and Safety of Radioactive Waste Management (Joint Convention)

The Joint Convention was adopted on 5 September 1997 and entered into force on 18 June 2001. The Joint Convention establishes an international peer review process among Contracting Parties and provides incentives for nations to take appropriate steps to bring their nuclear activities into compliance with general safety standards and practices. The Republic of South Africa acceded to the Joint Convention on 15 November 2006, and has been a strong supporter of its objectives since it entered into force on 13 February 2007. As of 3 March 2017, there were approximately 75 Contracting Parties to the Convention.

As president, Dr Tyobeka pledged his full commitment to leadership and working closely with the two Vice-Presidents; Mr Geoff Williams from the Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency (ARPANSA), as well as Mr Douglas Tonkay, from the United States Department of Energy to encourage constructive discussions on key issues faced by Contracting Parties. He further confirmed his support for engaging with Regional Networks, in particular those being part of the IAEA Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) – such as EuCAS (European and Central Asian Safety Network), ANSN (Asian Nuclear Safety Network), ANNuR (Arab Network of Nuclear Regulators), FNRBA (Forum of Nuclear Regulatory Bodies in Africa) and FORO (Forum of Ibero American

Radiological and Nuclear Safety Regulators) – to help support and assist IAEA Member States who are not already Contracting Parties to the Joint Convention to become Contracting Parties.

“The NNR is the competent national authority responsible for coordinating and implementing South Africa’s obligations to the Joint Convention. The appointment of Dr Tyobeka as the next President of the Joint Convention is indeed an honour for South Africa and the NNR. Dr Tyobeka brings a wealth of experience to the position, having worked for a number of institutions in the nuclear industry prior to joining the NNR. He has garnered extensive international experience over the years, representing South Africa and chairing international meetings on nuclear safety and security. We are confident that he will be a worthy President of the 6th Review Meeting of the Joint Convention and make our country proud”, said Dr Thapelo Motshudi, Chairperson, NNR Board of Directors.

Should you require more information, please contact me.

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About the Joint Convention

The Joint Convention is the first international instrument that deals with the safety of management and storage of spent fuel and radioactive waste in countries with and without nuclear programs. The Joint Convention is aimed at achieving and maintaining a high level of safety in spent fuel and radioactive waste management, ensuring that there are effective defences against potential hazards during all stages of management of such materials, and preventing accidents with radiological consequences. It elaborates on and expands the existing IAEA nuclear safety regime and promotes international standards in this area.

The Joint Convention covers the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management from civilian applications. It also applies to the management of military or defence-originated spent fuel and radioactive waste if and when such materials are transferred permanently to and managed within exclusively civilian programs. The Joint Convention calls on the contracting parties to review safety requirements and conduct environmental assessments both at existing and proposed spent fuel and radioactive waste management facilities. It provides for the establishment and maintenance of a legislative and regulatory framework to govern the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management.

The Joint Convention establishes rules and conditions for the trans-boundary movement of spent fuel and radioactive waste that inter alia require a State of destination to have adequate administrative and technical capacity and regulatory structure to manage spent fuel or radioactive waste in a manner consistent with the Joint Convention. It obligates a State of origin to take appropriate steps to permit re-entry into its territory of such material if a trans-boundary movement cannot be completed in conformity with the Joint Convention.

About the National Nuclear Regulator

The National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) is a public entity which is established and governed in terms of Section 3 of the National Nuclear Regulator Act, (Act No 47 of 1999). The fundamental objective of the NNR is to provide for the protection of persons, property and the environment against nuclear damage through the establishment of safety standards and regulatory practices suited for South Africa. To this end, the NNR provides oversight and assurance that activities related to the peaceful use of nuclear energy in South Africa are carried out in a safe manner and in accordance with international principles and best practices.