

International Regulators Conference on Nuclear Security
Chairman Burns
Opening Remarks
May 11, 2016

Thank you for asking me to speak this morning to help kick off this second International Regulators Conference on Nuclear Security. I'm pleased to be among my international colleagues and look forward to productive interactions both within the formal sessions and in the hallways, over coffee and during other opportunities for informal interactions.

I'd like to extend my sincere thanks to Spain's Nuclear Safety Council for hosting us today. These conferences do not put themselves on. They take a great deal of work and commitment, and we are very grateful to you for your efforts.

Let me begin by reminding us all how we got to be here. In December 2012, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission convened the first International Regulators' Conference on Nuclear Security near our headquarters just outside Washington D.C. Countries came together to discuss a wide range of activities relevant to enhancing regulatory approaches to security at civilian nuclear facilities.

The goal, at that time, was to bring about greater awareness of the importance of comprehensive national regulatory regimes for security, as well as offering a rare opportunity for colleagues in the security arena to build relationships. By all accounts, that goal was achieved.

Four years has passed – and certainly much has happened in those intervening years – and we come together again. And, again, we are here to continue to enhance the regulatory regimes for nuclear security activities around the world, and to support the implementation of good practices in this field.

This conference builds on the work of four years ago, with many of the same issues still foremost in our minds -- legal and regulatory frameworks for security; the methodologies of establishing design basis threats and undertaking threat assessments; information protection and cyber security; the interface of safety and security regulations; and personnel trustworthiness and reliability.

But there are also new regulatory challenges in an ever changing threat environment. The world, in four years, has not stood still. I believe we need to ensure we are prepared for the new and evolving threats we can expect to face.

The terrorist threats of groups such as ISIS, the challenge of drones, insider threats, increasingly sophisticated cybercrime and the possibility of new and advanced reactors being added to nuclear fleets around the world are much more than mere headlines in the media. They are what we as regulators now must consider day in and day out.

I recently attended the Nuclear Security Summit in April in Washington D.C. There, many of these same concerns were discussed, and it was acknowledged that much work remains to be done in the international security arena. There, it was also acknowledged that sustaining security improvement requires constant vigilance from us all.

In the next few days, I hope you will learn new approaches to meeting these security challenges, and that the speakers and the content directly benefit your security planning. You will hear about the experiences of our international colleagues and achievements to date in strengthening nuclear security; you may become aware of new trends and will be able to exchange views about the future.

I hope you will take advantage of our time together. One cannot underplay the importance of relationships, of knowing who is on the other end of the phone when you call with a problem or issue. We all benefit when we have established a personal framework of friendship and camaraderie upon which we can depend.

The benefit of the next few days will be found not only in the speakers and presentations, but also in the opportunity to meet your colleagues and further develop a network of friendship.

I know there is hope that these security conferences continue into the future – perhaps every three or four years -- building on the accomplishments, strengthening relationships and discussing the challenges that the ever-changing threat environment poses to us all.

It goes without saying that a strong security culture is as equally important as a strong safety culture. Thank you for being part of that global security culture with your participation in this second conference. I hope you have a meaningful, useful and fulfilling next few days.

Thank you again for allowing me an opportunity to speak.