



NRC NEWS

U.S. NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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**Chairman Allison M. Macfarlane
Welcome Remarks
International Regulators Conference on Nuclear Security
December 4, 2012**

Welcome to the first International Regulators Conference on Nuclear Security. On behalf of the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, we are pleased to host the international community to continue the dialogue on advancing global nuclear security.

Before I begin, let me take a moment to acknowledge my colleagues on the Commission: Kristine Svinicki, George Apostolakis, William Magwood, and William Ostendorff. I am Chairman of a five-member commission that is charged by statute to work as a collegial body. Each of us brings different backgrounds to the table and our ability to collaborate strengthens public trust and industry confidence in our work. Even with our diverse perspectives, one thing we can all agree on is the importance of an effective, balanced nuclear security program.

The NRC's mission is to ensure the health and safety of the public, promote the common defense and security, and protect the environment. We regulate the commercial use of nuclear and radioactive materials in power production, medicine, and research through licensing, inspection, and enforcement to guarantee that domestic facilities are operated safely and securely. We do not create national energy policy or advocate for nuclear energy. Our mission has a specific focus of ensuring safety and security: It requires support from all levels of government and the active participation of nuclear power plant and other facility operators.

While safety is a top priority at the NRC and we are continuously working to improve our approach to this construct, we also recognize that it is essential to focus efforts on constant improvement to our nuclear security program. This is the first conference to gather international regulators to discuss security and we view this as a continuation of ongoing efforts to work collaboratively with our domestic and international counterparts towards strengthening the security of nuclear materials worldwide. We hope that there will more conferences like this in the future.

Recent events around the world remind us of the importance of the security of nuclear facilities and nuclear materials. It is crucial that competent authorities not only require facilities to implement appropriate security measures, but that they develop strong inspection programs that verify and validate implementation. Materials must be secured and accounted for to

guarantee that they do not end up in the hands of the wrong people. It is incumbent upon each country, including the United States, to ensure that our regulatory structures are effective and responsive to the constant change that faces security professionals around the globe.

President Barack Obama has made nuclear security a cornerstone of his national security agenda. During the first term of his Administration, the United States set into action a plan to secure “all vulnerable nuclear material within four years.” The U.S. has, under the leadership of the National Nuclear Security Administration, made significant progress in this regard by working cooperatively with international partners to secure, remove, and down-blend large quantities of weapons-grade material. Each kilogram of material secured enhances the security of everyone, everywhere.

As part of the U.S. Administration’s commitment to nuclear security, President Obama convened the first international Nuclear Security Summit in Washington, D.C., in 2010 with the objective of better protecting nuclear material and preventing nuclear terrorism. The international participants agreed to work cooperatively to address what the President referred to as “one of the most challenging threats to international security.”

This year, the international community gathered at the second Nuclear Security Summit in Seoul, Korea, to reaffirm commitments to improve nuclear security. As part of the commitments made at the Summit, the United States agreed to host this conference on nuclear security to further discuss the need for comprehensive, independent, national regulatory security programs. This conference will also strengthen relationships with our international regulatory counterparts.

The statutory mandate for security at U.S. nuclear facilities requires the NRC to ensure that our licensees implement security measures to defend against threats to their facilities and materials. The NRC has a robust security program that covers civilian nuclear facilities, nuclear and radioactive materials, as well as waste. Our security regulations take a graded approach that is risk-informed and performance-based. They cover everything from physical protection to information and cyber security, including the transportation of material. In the years following 9/11, the agency enhanced its focus on security; I take great pride in saying that our facilities are among the most secure in the United States. We continue to incorporate the information gained through operating experience and lessons-learned to provide assurance that nuclear facilities are prepared to respond to the evolving threat. Force-on-force exercises are one of the most significant elements of the NRC’s security inspection program for nuclear power plants and Category I facilities. Force-on-force exercises assess the licensees’ ability to defend against various adversaries and provide valuable insights that enable the NRC to further strengthen its security programs. In recent years, we have made significant improvements in how we plan and conduct these exercises.

The NRC is honored to host the first International Regulators Conference on Nuclear Security. Over the course of the next few days, we will address a wide range of topics relevant to enhancing regulatory approaches for security at civilian facilities. You will have the opportunity to hear from the leading experts in nuclear security, counterterrorism, and international cooperation. As you walk around, I invite you to take time during the conference to see our

equipment exhibits and demonstrations related to the force-on-force exercises and other activities. They will give you an understanding of the rigorous nature of our security programs. Participants have joined the conference from all over the world, bringing with them a unique set of experiences and insights from which we will all learn. We will focus on the importance of establishing and maintaining a strong, independent legal and regulatory framework with technically skilled personnel and adequate resources to protect and secure nuclear and radioactive materials.

Nuclear security that successfully protects our citizens relies not only on the integration of technology, policy, and operational concepts, but also on international collaboration. We must share best practices and lessons learned to strengthen the framework for the security of nuclear materials. I look forward to the conversations in the days ahead on this important topic.

On behalf of the entire U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, I welcome you to the United States for this important discussion and thank you for contributing to its success.

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