



UNITED STATES  
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20555-0001

March 24, 2022

CHAIRMAN

Rafael Mariano Grossi  
Director General  
International Atomic Energy Agency  
Vienna International Centre  
P.O. Box 100  
1400 Vienna, Austria

Dear Director General Grossi,

Thank you for your correspondence of February 14, 2022, outlining your vision for the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA's) Nuclear Harmonization and Standardization Initiative (NHSI).

As you know, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) has been engaged in the IAEA's small modular reactor (SMR) and advanced reactor activities for many years. Most recently, more than 35 NRC technical experts provided input to the review of the applicability of IAEA safety standards for SMRs and other novel advanced reactors. The NRC has chaired the IAEA's SMR Regulators Forum since its inception. We are also strongly supportive of the IAEA's work with Member States to strengthen their regulatory infrastructure in anticipation of embarking on a nuclear energy program with SMRs.

In addition to these important activities at the IAEA, the NRC is involved in similar multilateral discussions through the Nuclear Energy Agency, the Generation IV International Forum, and previously through the Multinational Design Evaluation Programme. Further, the NRC has established a strong bilateral partnership with the Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission for joint technical reviews and development of regulatory approaches for advanced reactor and SMR technologies. These multilateral and bilateral endeavors have led to mutually beneficial common positions and joint reports. However, they have also spotlighted specific challenges to harmonization and standardization initiatives that will need to be acknowledged, particularly with regard to national sovereignty. It will be important to identify lessons learned from these previous efforts and articulate a clear vision for addressing them.

The NRC welcomes this opportunity to further engage with the IAEA and regulatory counterparts to discuss the NHSI and to understand its objectives. In particular, we seek to better understand your vision for how this initiative would work in concert with the above-mentioned multilateral activities. Please include the NRC in the meetings that you have proposed to exchange views on the NHSI. We look forward to these discussions and learning more about this initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christopher T. Hanson".

Christopher T. Hanson