

OECD Nuclear Energy Agency Opening Address

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Good afternoon, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am very honoured and pleased to open and chair this first session of the Workshop on Radiological Characterization for Decommissioning. So let me begin by thanking the co-organizers of this workshop - Studsvik Nuclear AB, Swedish Radiation Safety Authority (SSM), Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management Co (SKB) and AB SVAFO – for their continued efforts and dedication. Let me also thank all presenters and participants for their presence here and especially those of you who have travelled long distances to take part in this workshop.

We have over 120 participants, from 23 countries and four international organizations, representing stakeholder representatives, government policy and regulatory officials, research and development specialists, implementers and the industry.

Welcome.

The Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA), a specialized agency within the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development, follows its mission according to the Strategic Plan of the Nuclear Energy Agency for 2011-2016 *‘to assist its member countries in maintaining and further developing, through international co-operation, the scientific, technological and legal bases required for a safe, environmentally friendly and economical use of nuclear energy for peaceful purposes; and to provide authoritative assessments and to forge common understandings on key issues as input to government decisions on nuclear energy policy and to broader OECD policy analyses in areas such as energy and sustainable development’*. In order to achieve this, the NEA works as a forum for sharing information and experience and promoting international co-operation; a centre of excellence which helps member countries to pool and maintain their technical expertise and a vehicle for facilitating policy analyses and developing consensus based on its technical work.

The Nuclear Energy Agency flexibly reacts on demands of governments, regulators, research and development sector and industry, and opens issues for discussion through either its committees or specialized working parties operated by the committees. Under the Radioactive Waste Management Committee there are the Working Party on Decommissioning and Dismantling, and the Co-operative Program for the Exchange of Scientific and Technical Information concerning Nuclear Installation Decommissioning Projects, which are solely engaged in decommissioning work. Five out of seven committees address decommissioning as a cross-cutting issue.

The Working Party on Decommissioning and Dismantling (WPDD) has been working for more than 10 years as a discipline-oriented sub-group composed of nominees from the NEA Member

Countries, i.e. the regulatory authorities, research and development institutions and the decommissioning industry, both private and public. The Working Party's mission is to identify, analyze and document main issues in decommissioning in NEA member countries; to observe, on a world-wide level, the development of the state of the art of management and technique of decommissioning projects; and to facilitate multilateral communication and information exchange among WPDD members.

The WPDD works in various areas, e.g. regulatory implications, decommissioning and waste management optimization, research and development needs, decommissioning funding and cost, lessons learnt from decommissioning for new build, and also clearance of materials and release of sites.

In 2002 the WPDD organized in Karlsruhe, Germany, a topical session on Buildings & Sites Release and Reuse. Research and development area was presented at the session by dose modelling for the release of buildings and sites, software tools to address data management from surveys, and new measurement technologies for low contamination. Implementers showed examples of practical steps in measurement and decision making. Regulators' views and experience from a local community involvement in the process offered additional perspective on the subject.

The WPDD status report on Releasing the Sites of Nuclear Installations, issued in 2006, provides issues to be considered in decision making on the site release, guidance on derivation of release criteria, and presents aspects of the site release implementation. The publication Release of Radioactive Materials and Buildings from Regulatory Control, issued in 2008, provides at the time information on an array of national approaches to clearance in the scope of basic considerations on clearance, information of the derivation of clearance levels, and discussion on the implementation of the clearance process.

The WPDD, as methodology-oriented body, builds on the experience from the information exchange performed within already mentioned Co-operative Programme for the Exchange of Scientific and Technical Information on Decommissioning Projects (CPD). The CPD, as a technically-oriented body, is a joint undertaking of a limited number of organizations, mainly from NEA member countries. The objective of the CPD is to acquire and share information from operational experience in decommissioning nuclear installations that is useful for future projects. The CPD operates on a basis of periodically renewed agreement between companies and institutions representing their specific decommissioning projects, and it has been working for more than 25 years. Although part of the information exchanged within the CPD is confidential in nature and restricted to programme participants, experience of general interest gained under the programme's auspices is released for broader use.

The CPD report on Radioactivity Measurements at Regulatory Release Levels, issued in 2006, describes generic results obtained on available, adequate methods for measuring radioactivity on materials to be released from regulatory control, and also contains case studies from some NEA member countries as well as a critical discussion of different methods and techniques.

The Site Restoration is a newly established ongoing CPD project that will focus on technical aspects and good examples to follow; and continuous co-ordination with the WPDD activities on similar topics is being maintained to avoid overlaps and achieve complementary and synergic effect.

The NEA's Radioactive Waste Management Committee and its Working Party on Decommissioning and Dismantling have been delighted to respond needs of member countries and to establish the Task Group on Radiological Characterization for Decommissioning. Since its launch in April 2011, the Task Group has made a significant progress in gathering and analyzing information relevant to the subject, organized the topical session in November last year in Paris, and now is running this workshop in co-operation with and support of four Swedish organizations. Let me thank again the Swedish Radiation Safety Authority, Studsvik Nuclear AB, Swedish Nuclear Fuel and Waste Management Co (SKB) and AB SVAFO for preparation of this workshop.

In closing, I would like to repeat the main message of this meeting that well planned and managed characterization for decommissioning is necessary for safe, economical and timely decommissioning performance. This forum gives us the opportunity to review our successes, and chart the future.

I wish you all a very productive and successful meeting.