

POSITION PAPER

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Country : Republic Of Chile
Committee : International Atomic Energy Agency
Agenda : Radioactive Waste Management

“Radioactive wastes are the “Achilles’ heel” of nuclear power.”- Blowers. A¹

Radioactive wastes are generated in the nuclear fuel cycle as well as in nuclear applications in medicine, university research and industry. The incessant march of development in the third world countries is inevitably increasing the volumes of these wastes. The difficult but critical task of safe disposal of radioactive wastes is consequently gaining increasing importance.

The Republic of Chile set up its first nuclear research centre in 1968. Combined with over a hundred scientific, medical and industrial institutions Chile today generates around 25 m³ of low level waste and just about 2 m³ of high level waste.² A radioactive waste treatment plant has been in operation since 1990 at Lo Aguirre, for processing of low level wastes which has acted as IAEA’s Demonstration Center for methodologies and procedures in the management of radioactive waste from nuclear applications for Latin America and El Caribe. These procedures were the first one developed following international recommendations and complying requirements to immobilize the radioactive materials.

Chile has been a signatory of the **Joint Convention on Nuclear Safety** since 20th December 1996 and has always recognized the need for scientifically, politically and publicly acceptable radioactive waste management systems.

As early as 1984, **the Republic of Chile** had enacted the **Law of Nuclear Safety**³ and entrusted the **Chilean Nuclear Energy Commission** with the aim of taking overall responsibility of safe management and disposal of radioactive waste. The process of nuclear waste management follows the mandates included in the **Radioactive Waste Plan**⁴ issued by the Government from time to time.

Chile possesses the infrastructure required for effective management of radioactive waste from the institutional, administrative, technical and economic-financial points of view, and is continuously engaged in establishing appropriate measures to respond to society’s rights to access information and participation.

Reaffirming our unwavering determination and commitment to Global Nuclear Safety and Security Regime, we hereby suggest the following **FOUR- POINT-PLAN**:

- Highlight the need for continuous improvement and new thinking regarding new entrants and the rapidly expanding nuclear power programs.
- Promote self assessment combined with international peer review activities that are vital for vigilance and international cooperation.
- Expedite and encourage the remaining Member States to join the Convention on Nuclear Safety and to benefit from the mutual learning experience.
- Strengthen the capacities of States to follow the systems approach of radioactive waste management recommended by IAEA.

These innovative and practical promises will be difficult to achieve, but The Republic of Chile is resolved that they will be met by sincere action and the resources needed to ensure real and measurable results.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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