



# General Assembly

Distr.: Limited  
27 November 2009

Original: English

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**Committee on the Peaceful  
Uses of Outer Space  
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee  
Forty-seventh session  
Vienna, 8-19 February 2010  
Item 11 of the provisional agenda\*  
Use of nuclear power sources in outer space**

## **Draft elements of a potential new workplan of the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space**

**Working paper prepared by the Chairman of the Working Group**

### **I. Introduction**

1. The Safety Framework for Nuclear Power Source Applications in Outer Space<sup>1</sup> was adopted by the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee at its forty-sixth session,<sup>2</sup> in February 2009, and endorsed by the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space at its fifty-second session,<sup>3</sup> in June 2009.
2. The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) Commission on Safety Standards agreed on the Safety Framework at its twenty-fifth meeting, in April 2009.
3. Following that agreement, the Safety Framework was published jointly by the Subcommittee and IAEA in October 2009.
4. The Working Group held an informal intersessional meeting in Vienna from 2 to 4 June 2009, during the fifty-second session of the Committee. The purpose of the informal meeting was to discuss what might be the next steps to facilitate consideration of a potential new workplan for the Working Group.

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\* A/AC.105/C.1/L.300.

<sup>1</sup> A/AC.105/934.

<sup>2</sup> A/AC.105/933, para. 130.

<sup>3</sup> *Official Records of the General Assembly, Sixty-fourth Session, Supplement No. 20 (A/64/20)*, para. 138.



5. The present working paper presents the outcome of those discussions in terms of a possible new workplan aimed at promoting and facilitating the implementation of the Safety Framework and providing a sound basis for deciding what, if any, further work should be carried out to support implementation of the Safety Framework. The ideas in this paper represent some initial thoughts, and it is recognized that these thoughts may need to be modified and developed as the result of discussions within the Working Group. Member States and international intergovernmental organizations having permanent observer status with the Committee are encouraged to review and provide comments on this paper to the Working Group with the intent to inform such discussions at the forthcoming session of the Subcommittee.

## **A. Objective**

6. The workplan would have two, sequential objectives:

(a) To promote and facilitate the implementation of the Safety Framework by providing information pertinent to challenges faced by member States and international intergovernmental organizations, in particular those considering or initiating involvement in applications of nuclear power sources (NPS) in outer space;

(b) To identify any technical topics for, and establish the objectives, scope and attributes of, any potential additional work by the Working Group to further enhance the safe development and use of space NPS applications.

## **B. Strategy**

7. Member States and international intergovernmental organizations with experience in the design, development and use of space NPS applications would be invited to provide information on their implementation of the Safety Framework.

8. Member States and international intergovernmental organizations considering or initiating involvement in space NPS applications would be invited to summarize their plans, progress to date and any challenges faced or foreseen in implementing the Safety Framework or specific elements thereof.

9. Member States and international intergovernmental organizations with relevant experience would be invited to provide information (e.g. best practices) targeted to address those implementation issues and challenges identified by member States considering or initiating involvement in space NPS applications.

10. Based on a synthesis of the information exchanged, the Working Group would identify any technical topics and draft the objectives, scope and attributes of potential additional work to further enhance the safe development and use of space NPS applications.

## II. Proposed multi-year workplan

11. The proposed multi-year workplan of the Working Group for the period 2010-2015 would be as follows:

- 2010 Develop a workplan for approval by the Subcommittee; invite member States and international intergovernmental organizations with experience in space NPS applications to provide information in 2011 (at a workshop to be held in conjunction with the forty-eighth session of the Subcommittee) on their implementation of the Safety Framework; invite member States and international intergovernmental organizations considering or initiating involvement in space NPS applications to make presentations in 2011 and 2012 (at workshops to be held in conjunction with the forty-eighth and forty-ninth sessions of the Subcommittee, respectively) summarizing their plans, progress to date and any challenges faced or foreseen in adopting the Safety Framework or specific elements thereof.
- 2011 Hold an afternoon workshop, with simultaneous interpretation, during the first week of the forty-eighth session of the Subcommittee, with member States and international intergovernmental organizations making presentations pursuant to the invitation extended in 2010; invite member States and international intergovernmental organizations with experience in space NPS applications to make presentations in 2012 (at a workshop to be held in conjunction with the forty-ninth session of the Subcommittee) providing information pertinent to addressing the challenges identified by member States and international intergovernmental organizations considering or initiating involvement in space NPS applications.
- 2012 Hold a workshop under the same arrangements as in 2011, with member States and international intergovernmental organizations making presentations pursuant to the invitations extended in 2010 and 2011; invite member States and international intergovernmental organizations with experience in space NPS applications to make additional presentations in 2013 (at a workshop to be held under the same arrangements as in 2011) addressing the additional challenges identified in 2012.
- 2013 Hold a workshop under the same arrangements as in 2011 and 2012, with member States and international intergovernmental organizations making presentations pursuant to the invitation extended in 2012.
- 2014 Determine whether the current workplan should be extended; if it is not to be extended, prepare a draft report with recommendations for potential future work to promote and facilitate implementation of the Safety Framework.
- 2015 If the workplan has not been extended, finalize the report and recommendations.

### III. Advantages and disadvantages of other options considered in June 2009

12. A number of other options and their advantages and disadvantages were discussed in June 2009. The main points of the discussion are summarized below:

	<i>Advantages</i>	<i>Disadvantages</i>
1. Series of presentations made at a workshop held during plenary sessions of the Working Group	Presentations and discussions held in the official languages of the United Nations	Potential limitation on the number, duration and continuity of presentations (especially in 2011, when the Subcommittee's agenda will likely have significant portions devoted to the fiftieth anniversary of space flight); does not encourage expanded participation by member State mission organizations
2. Workshop or series of workshops conducted in conjunction with sessions of the Subcommittee		
a. In English only	Can be conducted without extrabudgetary funding; provides adequate time and continuity for presentations; encourages expanded participation by member State mission organizations	Potential to exclude member States that rely on interpretation support
b. Interpretation provided through extrabudgetary funding	Provides adequate time and continuity for presentations; encourages expanded participation by member State mission organizations	Requires extrabudgetary funding
3. Workshop or series of workshops conducted in conjunction with sessions of the Committee		
a. In English only	Advantages same as above	Disadvantages same as above, including that relevant representatives of the Subcommittee may be unable to attend
b. Interpretation provided through extrabudgetary funding	Advantages same as above	Disadvantages same as above
4. No action (relying on independent bilateral or multilateral arrangements)	Allows for the best articulation of needs and the most detailed response, unfettered by potential technology transfer limitations	Limits the broad promotion and implementation of the Safety Framework