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**Committee on the Peaceful
Uses of Outer Space
Scientific and Technical Subcommittee
Forty-fourth session
Vienna, 12-23 February 2007
Agenda item 8
Use of nuclear power sources in outer space**

Report of the Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space

1. At its 662nd meeting, on 14 February 2007, the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee reconvened its Working Group on the Use of Nuclear Power Sources in Outer Space under the chairmanship of Sam A. Harbison (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).
2. At the 1st meeting of the Working Group, on 15 February, the Chairman recalled the tasks before the Working Group, as contained in the multi-year workplan covering the period 2003-2007 for developing an international technically based framework of goals and recommendations for the safety of nuclear power source (NPS) applications in outer space, which the Subcommittee had endorsed at its fortieth session (A/AC.105/804, annex III) and amended at its forty-second session (A/AC.105/848, annex III). The Working Group informed the Subcommittee of the progress that had been made to date in achieving the objectives of the workplan for the period 2003-2007.
3. In accordance with the multi-year workplan, the Working Group had the following tasks before it at the forty-fourth session of the Subcommittee:
 - (a) Prepare the final report and recommend an implementation option to the Scientific and Technical Subcommittee;
 - (b) If the recommended implementation option is acceptable to the Subcommittee, prepare a new workplan to carry it out;
 - (c) If the recommended implementation option involves further joint activity with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), commence early discussions with the Agency to carry that out.



4. The Working Group updated, finalized and adopted its report drafted during its intersessional work in 2006, entitled “Development of an international technically based framework of goals and recommendations for the safety of planned and currently foreseeable nuclear power source applications in outer space”, based on the document A/AC.105/C.1/L.289. The final report, contained in A/AC.105/C.1/2007/CRP.16, was adopted by the Working Group using interpretation facilities. The Working Group requested the Secretariat to make the final report available to member States, as document A/AC.105/C.1/L.289/Rev.1, shortly after the conclusion of the forty-fourth session of the Subcommittee.

5. The Working Group recommended to the Subcommittee that, in order to prepare and publish the safety framework for NPS applications in outer space, a partnership be established between the Subcommittee and IAEA by means of a joint expert group, consisting of representatives of the Subcommittee and of IAEA.

6. For the purpose of establishing a joint STSC/IAEA safety framework development activity for NPS applications in outer space, the Working Group recommended a new multi-year workplan as follows:

Year 2007:

Adopt a schedule of work and complete a draft document preparation profile for review and approval by IAEA and the Subcommittee. Resolve any differences between the workplan of the Subcommittee and the final IAEA document preparation profile. Initiate framework drafting and consultation meetings;

Year 2008:

Hold framework drafting and consultation meetings. Review progress on the draft framework and confirm final version of workplan with the Subcommittee. Prepare draft framework for review by the Subcommittee and IAEA;

Year 2009:

The Subcommittee will review the draft framework. Hold framework drafting and consultation meetings to revise the draft framework based on the comments received from member States of, and other entities represented at, the Subcommittee and IAEA. Prepare final framework.

Year 2010:

Review and endorsement of final framework by the Subcommittee and IAEA. Publish the framework.

7. Annex I of A/AC.105/C.1/2007/CRP.16 provides a representative timeline for the joint expert group and associated activities of the Subcommittee and IAEA.

8. The Working Group requested the Secretariat to invite member States and permanent observers to participate in the joint expert group, to be established by the Subcommittee and IAEA. During the forty-fourth session of the Subcommittee, the following member States and permanent observers indicated their participation in this joint activity: Argentina, China, France, Germany, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Nigeria, Russian Federation, United Kingdom, United States of America and the European Space Agency (ESA).

9. In order to establish the working relationships between the Subcommittee and IAEA, the Working Group requested the Secretariat to submit to IAEA its final report, to be contained in A/AC.105/C.1/L.289/Rev.1, and to invite IAEA to participate in the joint expert group.

10. The Working Group agreed that the work of the joint expert group would be conducted by means of electronic exchange of information, as well as through drafting and consultation meetings, to be held in Vienna. Progress reports and results of the work of the joint expert group will be submitted to the Subcommittee in the official languages of the United Nations. The Working Group also agreed that member States and permanent observers should fund the participation of their experts, including the provision of interpretation, where necessary.

11. The Working Group agreed on the following tentative schedule of meetings of the joint expert group for the year 2007:

9 and 10 May 2007

18-20 June 2007

23-25 October 2007

The Working Group also agreed that the need for any or all of these meetings and their exact timing would be transmitted to all participants in the joint experts group through the Secretariat.

12. At its [5th] meeting, on [22] February, the Working Group adopted the present report.