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**A CONCERTED ACTION TOWARDS IMPROVED INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE TO NUCLEAR AND RADIOLOGICAL EVENTS.**

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After the Chernobyl accident in 1986, two conventions, the Convention on Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident and the Convention on Assistance in the Case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency, were established in order to provide a framework for enhanced international cooperation in the response to such events. It has however been widely recognised that a better practical implementation of these conventions could significantly enhance our response capabilities.

In order to achieve this the IAEA Member States, their Competent Authorities and the IAEA Secretariat have developed an International Action Plan for Strengthening the International Preparedness and Response System for Nuclear and Radiological Emergencies, 2004-2009.

This Action Plan has three main elements:

- International communication
- International assistance
- Sustainable infrastructure

and Working Groups and Expert Groups have been established to carry out the work in accordance with the plan. The implementation of the Action Plan is managed jointly by the IAEA Secretariat and the National Competent Authority Coordinating Group, NCACG. Currently some 65 experts from about 30 different states and international organisations are taking part. Two of the main goals of this work are to develop standardised/harmonised response procedures necessary for efficient provision of international assistance and establishment of a common unified communication platform. A more detailed update on the development of the work will be given.

The development and implementation of this Action Plan is an important milestone in nuclear and radiological emergency preparedness and response and will offer an opportunity for the international society to establish a better and more cost efficient response capability. The standardised procedures and the unified communication platform established will subsequently have to be adopted and implemented by states and international organisations. This may have significant impact on the national procedures currently in use in many areas related to nuclear and radiological emergency response, but we are confident that that proper adoption and implementation of the results of this work will result in a significantly better and more cost effective preparedness and response capability all over the world.