Nuclear Security Education and Training at Naif Arab University for Security Sciences

Amjad Fataftah

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

E-mail address of main author: afataftah@yahoo.com

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) was established in 1978 as an Arab institution specialized in security sciences to fulfill the needs of the Arab law enforcement agencies for an academic institution that promotes research in security sciences, offers graduate education programs and conduct short-term training courses, which should contribute to the prevention and control of crimes in the Arab world. NAUSS is a regional organization providing education and training in all security disciplines to students from all the 22 Arab countries. NAUSS is operated by board of directors reporting directly to the Council of Arab Ministers of Interiors (CAMI). HRH Prince Naif Bin Abdul Aziz, the Saudi Minister of interior is the chairman of board of directors.

Terrorism is a global phenomenon endangering the geopolitical and socioeconomic stability of many peaceful countries all over the world. The crucial contribution of educational institutions in confronting terrorism is parallel to the role played by security apparatus in its combat. This confirms the central role of universities, institutions of academic and professional training, security research organizations and sanctuaries of worship in the overall confrontation against terrorism. Unique among these universities is NAUSS which has made tremendous contributions to fight against crime and terrorism through its academic endeavors. NAUSS designed special curricula and professional training programs to identify, prevent and combat terrorism. Apart from the academic activities at NAUSS, special attention is given to enhance the public awareness about the evil act of terrorism through organizing open lectures, seminars and other mass media channels.

Terrorism is a very old phenomenon, which maintain the same meaning all of these years, but has improved by its tools which started with knives and swords and now by chemical and nuclear bombs and even with civilian airplanes. After the tragic events of September 11, 2001, there has been an increasing concern among the international community concerning the use of nuclear and radioactive sources in malicious acts, and that is what is known as nuclear terrorism. This has encouraged the International Atomic energy Agency (IAEA) to develop and engaged in a series of activities for the protection and prevention against nuclear terrorism. These activities are coordinated through the agency’s Office of Nuclear Security.

The IAEA and thought its office of nuclear security approached NAUSS, as a leader in security sciences in the Arab world, to form a partnership aiming at combating nuclear terrorism through conducting training and education programs in nuclear security. This resulted in signing a practical arrangement which calls for: Promote institutional exchanges by inviting scholars and delegates; Organize Symposia, conferences, meetings and training on
relevant issues; Exchange information pertaining to developments in the areas of mutual concern in our respective institutions; Carry out other joint programs and activities of cooperation as may be agreed upon by the parties.

As a result of this arrangement, NAUSS and the IAEA organized the first workshop on nuclear security on November, 2006, which aimed to explore and improve the nuclear security culture awareness through the definitions of the nuclear security main pillars, Prevention, Detection and Response. The workshop was attended by more that seventy participants of law enforcement background from many Arab countries. Also NAUSS participated in the yearly nuclear security seminar organized by the IAEA in collaboration with United States government at Argonne national laboratory, and presented a paper on the forensic analysis of explosive. In addition, NAUSS and IAEA organized a very important training course on April, 2008 on combating nuclear terrorism titled “Protection against nuclear terrorism: Protection of radioactive sources”. More than sixty five participants attended the training course from ministries of interior, justice and health from most of the Arab countries.

In the past two years, IAEA has put tremendous efforts to develop an education program in nuclear security, which may lead into Master’s degree in nuclear security, where NAUSS helped in this project through the participation in the IAEA organized consultancy and technical meetings for the development of this program along with many other academic, security and law enforcement experts and lawyers from many different institution in the world. NAUSS is very much interested in the implementation of these educational programs through its offered academic security sciences graduate programs. For this purpose NAUSS and IAEA drafted a work plan for the next coming two years which should lead into the gradual implementation of these educational programs at NAUSS. The plan starts with the incorporation of an introductory course in nuclear security into the existing graduate studies security sciences program at the police sciences department of the college of graduate studies at NAUSS. In a next step the plan calls for the development of a one-semester certificate program in nuclear security, which hopefully will lead into the establishment of a full Master’s degree in nuclear security. The plan also calls for the needed technical assistant from IAEA in the providing teachers, training of NAUSS faculty members, translation of all the related materials into Arabic language and providing the technical assistant for the establishment of needed nuclear security laboratories.

NAUSS also continues to participate in several local conferences and symposiums related to the peaceful application of nuclear power in the gulf region, and the need for a human resources development programs to fulfill the scientific and security needs which will arise from building nuclear power plants. NAUSS participated in the International Symposium on the Peaceful Application of Nuclear Technology in the GCC countries, organized by King Abdulaziz University in the city of Jeddah, Saudi Arabia. Also NAUSS participated in the Annual Energy Conference (Nuclear Energy in the Gulf” organized by the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and research, held at the city of Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates.