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Press Release 2011/18

International Nuclear and Radiation Safety Experts Conclude IAEA Peer Review of Slovenia's Regulatory System

4 October 2011 | *Ljubljana, Slovenia* -- An international team of senior nuclear safety experts today concluded a 10-day mission to review the regulatory framework for nuclear and radiation safety in Slovenia.

The team identified good practices and gave advice on areas for future improvements. The IAEA has conveyed the team's main conclusions to the Government of Slovenia and a final report will be submitted by the end of 2011.

At the request of the Slovenian Government, the IAEA assembled a team of 10 senior regulatory experts from nine nations to conduct the Integrated Regulatory Review Service (IRRS) mission involving the Slovenian Nuclear Safety Administration (SNSA). The mission is a peer review based on the *IAEA Safety Standards*.

Andrej Stritar, Director of Slovenian Nuclear Safety Administration, stressed "how important it is for a small country like Slovenia to tightly follow international standards in the area of nuclear safety." He also expressed his gratitude to the IAEA, and the countries from which team members came, for their support and for their intensive work during the last ten days.

Mission Team Leader Colin Patchett, Deputy Chief Inspector from the UK's Office for Nuclear Regulation commended "the Slovenian authorities for their commitment to nuclear and radiation safety regulation and for sharing their experience."

The IRRS team reviewed Slovenia's current regulatory framework and all SNSA-regulated facilities and activities, as well as the regulatory implications of the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi accident.

The IRRS team identified particular strengths in the Slovenian regulatory system, including:

- Through its legal framework, the Slovenian government has appointed SNSA to regulate its nuclear safety program and SNSA has in place an effective process for carrying out this responsibility; and
- Slovenia's response to the accident at the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi power plant has been prompt and effective. Communications with the public, development of actions for improvement within the Slovenian nuclear industry and coordination with international stakeholders was considered effective. Further lessons learned will also need to be adequately addressed.

Among the good practices identified by the IRRS Review Team were:

- The development of SSNA's quality management system, through which it will be able to improve its regulatory effectiveness; and
- SNSA has developed, maintains and uses an integrated information management system.

The IRRS Review Team also identified certain issues warranting attention or in need of improvement. It believes that consideration of these would enhance the overall performance of the future regulatory system:

- Slovenia should develop a national policy and strategy for nuclear safety which would be supported by a national co-ordinated plan to ensure the appropriate national infrastructure is in place;
- Consideration should be given to possible alternative methods of financing SNSA to provide it with the flexibility to meet its regulatory responsibilities while also ensuring it operates effectively. This should include provision for research and development;
- SNSA should develop and implement a process for carrying out a systematic review of the organisational structure, competencies and resource needed for it to effectively discharge its current and future responsibilities; and
- The Government should make the necessary provision for the Low and Intermediate Level Waste Repository to ensure radioactive waste can be disposed at the appropriate time.

Background

The IRRS mission to Slovenia was conducted from 25 September to 4 October, mainly in Ljubljana. The team also visited several nuclear and radiation facilities, including the nuclear power plant, the research reactor and the country's emergency response centres.

The IRRS reviewed the following regulatory areas: responsibilities and functions of the government; the global nuclear safety regime; responsibilities and functions of the regulatory body; the management system of the regulatory body; the activities of the regulatory body, emergency preparedness and response; radioactive waste management; decommissioning; public and environmental exposure control; and transport. SNSA's actions in response to the TEPCO Fukushima Daiichi accident were also addressed. In addition, the IRRS mission included policy discussions on long-term operation of nuclear power plants and radioactive waste management.

The IRRS review addressed all SNSA-regulated facilities and activities: one nuclear power plant, one research reactor, one radioactive waste storage facility, the former uranium mine, and all use of radiation sources outside the health and veterinary sectors. Radiation sources in the health and veterinary sector (not regulated by SNSA) were not included in the scope.

Team experts came from nine different countries: Argentina, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Norway, Romania, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

About IRRS Missions

IRRS missions are designed to strengthen and enhance the effectiveness of the national nuclear regulatory

infrastructure of States, while recognizing the ultimate responsibility of each State to ensure safety in this area.

This is done through consideration of both regulatory, technical and policy issues, with comparisons against *IAEA Safety Standards* and, where appropriate, good practices elsewhere.

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