

**Chair's Summary of the 12th APSN Plenary Meeting
(Virtual Meeting)
24th - 25th February 2022
Hanoi, Viet Nam**

1. The 12th Asia-Pacific Safeguards Network (APSN) Annual Meeting was held on 24th - 25th February 2022, participated by 70 representatives from 20 countries and organizations, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), European Safeguards Research and Development Association (ESARDA) and UAE Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulations (FANR) for the 1st time. Due to the restriction of face-to-face activities during Covid-19 pandemic, the meeting was conducted through a virtual platform.
2. The APSN meeting was hosted by the Government of Socialist Republic of Viet Nam and organized by Viet Nam Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Safety (VARANS) with three main agenda items: (1) Steering Committee Meeting, which was a strategic meeting among four APSN Steering Committee Members and Viet Nam (temporary member of Steering Committee); (2) topical sessions, which were dedicated for knowledge and information sharing and updating on safeguards implementation; and (3) APSN next steps and future activities. The three main agenda items were addressed in nine sessions (see agenda attached).
3. The 12th APSN meeting was opened and chaired by Prof. Nguyen Tuan Khai, the Director General of VARANS, as the APSN Chairman. In the Opening session, Prof. Nguyen Tuan Khai gave opening remarks conveying the messages that Viet Nam reaffirms its full support for the APSN and the strong commitment to their IAEA safeguards agreement as always. He also emphasized that the APSN member countries are benefiting from the Network through exchanging information, sharing best practices, mutual support and focusing on regional training for capacity building.
4. During the opening session, Dr. Geoffrey Shaw, Director General, of Australian Safeguards Non-Proliferation Office (ASNO) also presented opening remarks and summarised the outcomes of the APSN Steering Committee (SC) Group meeting which included:
 - a) Australia to continue as Steering Committee Chair until end of 2022 after which Japan will assume this role;
 - b) Thailand nominated as Chair of APSN for 2023-24;
 - c) Potential APSN activities at the 2022 IAEA Safeguards Symposium; and
 - d) Undertaking to address gender balance in safeguards, in support of the IAEA Director General's priority on this matter.

5. The second meeting session was entitled “IAEA Program and Activities on Safeguards Implementation under COVID-19: Past experiences and future plans”. The session invited IAEA experts: Mr. Peter Rance, Section Head, OAC, Department of Safeguards, IAEA gave a presentation on “Safeguards implementation and initiatives” including 2022 Priorities (encouraging APSN members to contribute to the Symposium Abstracts submission); emphasized the key assurances of safeguards implementation on the State level and State-level safeguards approach (SLA), IAEA effort in SLA Improvement Project to ensure consistency of SLA in analyzing acquisition paths, improving technical objective standardization. Mr. Craig Everton, Section Head OA3, Department of Safeguards, IAEA presented an update on the IAEA’s COMPASS project which brings assistance to Member States. Mr. Can Viet Tuan, VARANS/ Viet Nam gave a presentation on “Safeguards implementation: Situational practice & challenges” in which he described the practices in Viet Nam over the past two years in fulfilling its safeguards obligation to the Agency adapting the application of restricted measures to control covid-19 diseases. The challenges of VARANS in human resources for nuclear safeguards were also mentioned.

The Session was facilitated by Mr. Stephan Bayer, Director, IAEA Safeguards Division, Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office (ASNO) (Australia).

6. In the third session, each APSN member state participating in the meeting delivered a short statement on their country’s safeguards implementation in the past year. In general, APSN members provided updates on their recent safeguards implementation activities, especially under covid-19-related circumstances. Members emphasized the benefits of being a member of APSN, and expectations for the future APSN activities. The European Safeguards Research and Development Association (ESARDA) contributed to the Meeting with a pre-recorded video on its activities to support capacity building demand of the network members.

This session was facilitated by Ms. Bui Thi Thuy Anh, Director of International Cooperation, Viet Nam Agency for Radiation and Nuclear Safety (VARANS), Viet Nam.

7. In Day 2, the fourth Meeting session was entitled “APSN Activities over 2020-2021”. Ms. Margot Mininni presented on “Safeguards Engagement and Training since Covid-19 Pandemic”. The Meeting also discussed the practices of organizing virtual trainings (challenges, opportunities and new directions...to produce higher effectiveness of Human Resource Development activities).

The Session was facilitated by Dr. Hoo-sik Yoo, Vice President, Korea Institute of Nuclear Nonproliferation and Control (KINAC), Republic of Korea.

8. The fifth Meeting session was entitled “Capacity Building: Member States experiences and needs”. Mr. Hori Masato, Deputy Director, ISCN/JAEA shared experiences in organizing online trainings adapted under Covid-19

conditions (integration of online lectures and e-learning modules, shortened training duration, enhanced interaction among participants, cooperation and support from IAEA/DOE, etc.). Mr. David Moroz, Director, International Safeguards Division, CNSC also shared experiences on regulatory activities and training programs in Canada.

The Session was facilitated by Mr. Murakami Kenji, Special Assistant to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Japan. The Session provided useful information and exchange of views on capacity building and managing capabilities.

9. The sixth Meeting session was entitled “Safeguards by Design”. Mr. Jeremy Whitlock, Section Head, Nuclear Safeguards Department, IAEA discussed the types, benefits and examples of SBD. His presentation also provided Safeguards considerations for SMRs, safeguards technical needs for SMRs, and challenges in implementing SBD. Dr. Anagha Iyengar, DOE/NNSA spoke on recommendations for SRA and the assistance NNSA could provide.

The Session was facilitated by Mr. Kusbandono, Deputy Director for Safeguards Inspection Division, Nuclear Energy Regulatory Agency (BAPETEN), Indonesia.

10. In the session on APSN next steps and future activities, Mr. Stephan Bayer, Director, IAEA Safeguards Division, Australian Safeguards and Non-Proliferation Office (ASNO) (Australia) facilitated a discussion on APSN future activities including: the 2nd APSN meeting in first half of December 2022, elaboration of ideas for APSN activities at the 2022 IAEA Safeguards Symposium, and enlargement of APSN members. The Meeting also gained APSN’s endorsement for Thailand to take up the Chair of APSN for the next two years (2023 to 2024). Mr. Tularak Thitidej on behalf of Office of Atoms for Peace (OAP)/Thailand expressed the readiness and support of Thailand to strengthen the Network cooperation.

11. Under the session on “Any Other Business”, the Meeting welcomed for the first time the participation of UAE Federal Authority for Nuclear Regulation (FANR) as an observer. Mr. Stephen Brion, FANR Safeguards Manager, introduced FANR participants and expressed FANR’s sincere gratitude for the invitation to observe the Meeting. Mr. Luay Qassim, Nuclear Non-Proliferation Engineer, presented the UAE’s nuclear sector and safeguards activities. He highlighted the UAE’s commitment to the highest standards of nuclear non-proliferation, its efforts in international cooperation and engagement, and FANR’s interest in working with APSN.

12. In the closing remarks, Ms. Bui Thi Thuy Anh on behalf of VARANS/Viet Nam once again expressed her sincere gratitude to all facilitators, presenters and participants for the exchange of their experiences and discussions during the meeting. Ms. Bui Thi Thuy Anh also expressed her highest appreciation to the Steering Committee Members, to Indonesia as the previous Chair of APSN, US-DOE, IAEA and ESARDA, as well as all participating countries for their extension of support for the Network.