Terms of Reference

STEERING COMMITTEE OF THE GLOBAL NUCLEAR SAFETY AND SECURITY NETWORK (GNSSN)

September 2021

A. Background

One of the main functions of the Agency is "*To foster the exchange of scientific and technical information on peaceful uses of atomic energy*" (IAEA Statutes, Article III. A. 3.). Article VIII. C. further states that the Agency "*shall take positive steps to encourage the exchange among its members of information relating to the nature and peaceful uses of atomic energy and shall serve as an intermediary among its members for this purpose*".

The launch of the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) was formally announced at the International Conference on Effective Nuclear Regulatory Systems: Facing Safety and Security Challenges, held in Moscow, Russian Federation, in 2006. It was a step which took into consideration the recommendations contained in the International Nuclear Safety Group (INSAG) report *Strengthening the Global Nuclear Safety Regime* (INSAG Series No. 21, IAEA, Vienna, 2006). The GNSSN supports the IAEA's Nuclear Safety and Security Programme (Major Programme 3) by enhancing international cooperation and dialogue in the field of nuclear safety[1] and security with key stakeholders. The stakeholder community includes government agencies and ministries; regulatory authorities; private users of materials and technologies; and international organizations. In addition, GNSSN as a knowledge network is part of the comprehensive IAEA methodology for capacity building and demonstrates the potential value of networking and sharing experience towards enhancing nuclear safety and security globally.

The initial development of the GNSSN was carried out jointly by IAEA and the G8 Nuclear Safety and Security Group in 2007 and since then it has evolved into a strong human and information technology (IT) platform supporting the establishment and continued efforts of global, regional, and thematic nuclear safety and security associations, forums and networks. Recognizing the continued importance of networking and international cooperation, sharing experiences, and preserving knowledge, Member States have routinely requested the IAEA Secretariat to support and coordinate regional and inter-regional efforts for the sharing of knowledge, expertise and experience on safety-relevant issues, and to continue to strengthen its effort in maintaining and developing the GNSSN, and have encouraged Member States to actively participate in the GNSSN, most recently in GC Resolution GC(65)/RES/8. Considering this mandate, the IAEA Secretariat has supported the GNSSN since its inception and continues to provide technical and secretariat support for a wide range of activities.

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[1] For the purposes of this document, the phrase "nuclear safety" should be interpreted to include nuclear, radiation, waste, and transport safety, as well as emergency and preparedness response.

The activities and focus of the GNSSN programme are guided by three principal documents:

- GNSSN Strategic Plan

  The Strategic Plan provides background on the GNSSN, identifies the mission and objectives, and lays out an action plan to accomplish the objectives with corresponding performance indicators to gauge success.

- GNSSN Steering Committee Terms of Reference

  The Terms of References establish the GNSSN Steering Committee and highlight its role and main functions within the broader GNSSN programme.

- GNSSN IT Governance Plan

  The Governance Plan is intended to guide the IAEA Secretariat in how to maintain, and use, the IT infrastructure associated with the GNSSN.

The 2020-2023 term of the Steering Committee initiated an effort to revise the foundational documents such as this Terms of Reference, the Strategic Plan, and the Governance Plan during calendar year 2021. The final version of this Terms of Reference was adopted during the Steering Committee meeting held on 29-30 June, 2021.

B. Functions

The Steering Committee (SC) serves as the principle external advisory body that provides guidance on GNSSN activities, and those of associated networks[2], to the Deputy Director General, Head of the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security (DDG-NS) and other IAEA officials. The SC provides independent advice and assessment, principally focused on ensuring the effectiveness of the GNSSN programme, as well as helping to advertise and promote the activities, objectives, and mission of the GNSSN to stakeholders. The specific functions of the SC include:

- Review and revise, as needed, the GNSSN Strategic Plan;

- Develop and approve an action plan based on the objectives in the GNSSN Strategic Plan;

- Advise the DDG-NS on the human and financial resources needed for the implementation of the GNSSN Strategic Plan, as well as considerations on how to ensure the long-term sustainability of activities in support of GNSSN objectives;

- Periodically review and provide recommendations and guidance to the DDG-NS and other IAEA officials on how best to utilize technology and the GNSSN IT infrastructure to meet the objectives of the GNSSN;

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[2] For the purposes of this document, the phrase "associated networks" refers to any network focused on nuclear safety and security issues, comprised primarily of Member State representatives, and which receives IAEA secretariat support or funding for its activities and management. Examples include the major regional networks such as FNRBA and thematic networks such as TSOF.

- Review and endorse the end-of-year report that includes major outcomes of the GNSSN programme for that year and highlights major upcoming events and anticipated developments in the next year;

- Provide an end-of-term, forward-looking report that identifies future challenges and areas for enhancement related to the GNSSN mission;

- Propose, approve, and establish, when needed, ad-hoc and topical working groups that will accomplish a specific set of tasks as outlined by the SC, and with due consideration given to avoid duplicating existing technical activities;

- Encourage closer cooperation and coordination with and between the associated networks of GNSSN and IAEA programmes across multiple departments (e.g., NS, NE, TC);

- Foster new partnerships, or enhanced cooperation, with international organizations and associations; and

- Raise awareness of technical needs with prospective donors.

The IAEA will provide the services of a staff member to serve as the GNSSN Secretariat. The GNSSN Secretariat will support the planning and implementation of the SC, and additional tasks as requested by the SC Chair and Vice-Chair. The functions of the GNSSN Secretariat include:

- Identify topics for inclusion on meeting agendas and for consideration by the SC, and support the Chair and Vice-Chair in organizing and scheduling meetings;

- Write reports, meeting summaries, and communication materials for the Chair and Vice-Chair;

- Serve as a central coordinator for IAEA staff supporting the activities of GNSSN and associated networks;

- Assess and report to the SC on progress in achieving the objectives and outcomes from the GNSSN Strategic Plan;

- Periodically review, and if necessary, recommend revisions to the GNSSN Strategic Plan by the SC;

- Promote awareness of GNSSN activities and outcomes at international meetings, conferences, and symposiums; and

- Support the management of the GNSSN IT infrastructure and provide oversight to ensure the GNSSN IT Governance Plan is implemented by stakeholders.

C. Membership

- The SC is a standing body of experts with knowledge and experience in nuclear safety and/or security, as well as representatives of associated networks and international organizations involved in nuclear safety and security activities. The SC will be comprised of no more than 18 members, in total, not including the IAEA GNSSN Secretariat.

- Members nominated by their respective governments or organizations will be appointed by the DDG-NS for a three-year term on the SC. Members should have recognized expertise in nuclear safety and/or security, international cooperation in these areas, as well as related IAEA's advisory mission and activities.

- Members can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms on the SC. If a SC member cannot participate in a SC meeting, he or she can designate another person to take his or her place for that particular SC meeting with prior consent of the SC chair.

- The Chair and Vice- Chair of the SC are directly appointed by the DDG-NS from amongst the appointed members representing Member States and will serve for a term of three years. The Chair and Vice-Chair can serve a maximum of two consecutive terms on the SC.

- The background of each member will be considered to strive for a balance between representatives with academic, industry, and government experience. Additionally, consideration will be given to ensuring gender and geographic diversity amongst the experts appointed to the SC.

- The Chair or Vice-Chair, or another appropriate representative, of each associated network will be appointed as a member of the SC. There is no limit for how many terms a representative from an associated network can serve on the SC.

- International organizations engaged in nuclear safety and/or security activities will be given the opportunity to nominate a representative to serve as a member on the SC. DDG-NS will determine which organizations should be included for consideration, as well as the appropriate number of international organizations to include in the SC. However, the total number of members from international organizations will not exceed four. There is no limit for how many terms a representative from an international organization can serve on the SC.

- Additional observers can be invited to attend SC meetings for informational purposes at the discretion of the Chair and Vice-Chair.

- Six months prior to the start of a new three-year term, the DDG-NS will begin the process of appointing new SC members.

D. Working Methods

- The GNSSN SC will meet twice a year at a minimum, either at the IAEA Headquarters in Vienna or in a Member State. Consideration should be given that at least one meeting a year is held virtually to reduce the financial and administrative burden of attendance.

- Meetings of the GNSSN SC will be convened by its chairperson through notifications issued by the GNSSN Secretariat. Attendance at GNSSN SC meetings are mandatory for members of the SC. Additional participants can be invited to speak or observe at the discretion of the Chair, Vice-Chair, and the GNSSN Secretariat.

- The recommendations and reports of GNSSN will be published on the [IAEA- GNSSN](#) website.

- The GNSSN Secretariat will ensure appropriate representation of IAEA staff and managers at SC meetings, including DDG-NS, directors of technical divisions and centres within the

IAEA's Department of Nuclear Safety and Security and other relevant representatives of the IAEA Secretariat.

- The Chair and Vice-Chair of the SC will serve as the principal liaisons with the IAEA Secretariat on matters related to the functions of the SC. Formal products, such as the end-of-term report and reviews of existing documents, will be communicated in writing from the Chair and Vice-Chair to the DDG-NS for appropriate action.

- The SC will establish ad-hoc and thematic working groups on specific issues as necessary. The working groups will be established with volunteers from members of the SC and the workplans, including overall objectives and expected outputs, will be approved by the SC.

- Decisions are to be made by consensus when possible. In the absence of consensus, the Chair and Vice-Chair are granted the final decision-making authority. However, the lack of consensus must be noted formally, in an appropriate manner.

- All GNSSN meetings will be conducted in English.

- These Terms of Reference will be reviewed by the GNSSN Secretariat on a six-year cycle. The results of this review will be presented to the SC for potential action, as required.

E. Resources

- The GNSSN Secretariat and administrative services for GNSSN will be provided by the Office of Safety and Security Coordination within the IAEA's Department of Nuclear Safety and Security.

- The IAEA will seek adequate resources for the continued maintenance and updating of the GNSSN IT infrastructure and the information contained therein.

- The IAEA will ensure the use of extrabudgetary funds for GNSSN activities is consistent with donor requirements and preferences.

- The IAEA is generally not in a position to bear the travel and other costs of participants in IAEA events. The IAEA has, however, limited funds at its disposal to help meet the cost of attendance of certain participants. Upon specific request, such assistance may be offered to Steering Committee members.