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Engaging Parliamentarians on Nuclear Security

Lessons Learned from a High-Level Workshop on Legal Instruments for Nuclear Security

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Executive Summary

On 23 and 24 April 2024, the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP), in cooperation with the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), hosted a High-Level Workshop on Legal Instruments for Nuclear Security to promote adherence among parliamentarians to the [Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material \(CPPNM\)](#), its [2005 Amendment](#), and the [International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism \(ICSANT\)](#). The workshop involved 15 members of parliament and/or senior officials from seven countries: Bahamas, Iraq, Mongolia, Somalia, Tanzania, Togo, and Zambia.

An important goal for the international nuclear security community is that all States around the world should adhere to the CPPNM, its Amendment, and ICSANT, and that these conventions are robustly implemented by all adhering States. Efforts in this area have been successful: the number of adherents to these legal instruments for nuclear security is large and growing. As of 2 September 2024, out of 193 UN Member States, there were 164 Parties to the CPPNM, 136 to its Amendment, and 124 Parties to ICSANT.

However, States still remain that have not yet adhered to the CPPNM, its Amendment, and ICSANT. The reasons for this are varied. A common challenge in many of these States is a lack of political prioritisation or a lack of awareness within the national parliament or among high-level political officials, even when the required technical and/or other needed infrastructure to advance implementation of the convention is already in place.

The goal of the VCDNP/IPU workshop was to directly address this challenge by seeking to motivate relevant parliamentarians and other senior officials to become champions for these legal instruments in their parliaments.



Left to right: IPU Representative Ambassador Brigitte Brenner, IAEA Director General Rafael M. Grossi, VCDNP Executive Director Elena K. Sokova, VCDNP Senior Fellow Dr. Sarah Case Lackner

To this end, the workshop facilitated discussions between parliamentarians, experts, and officials from international organisations such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL), and members of the Vienna diplomatic community, including a number of ambassadors.

Initial signals since the workshop was convened indicate that it was successful in reaching this goal, although follow up will continue in the coming months. During the closing session, some participants reported that they were charged with briefing their parliaments or relevant committees upon their return. Further, in one country, meetings between the national regulator and parliament were organised as an initial follow up to the discussions in the workshop.

This workshop was not intended to be a stand-alone event, but rather a pilot effort to demonstrate the effectiveness of engaging experts and key stakeholders in nuclear security with parliamentarians on this issue, and to identify lessons learned for future activities in this area. Drawing on the conversations during the workshop as well as the experience of organising the workshop, we have identified six key recommendations:

1. Outreach on nuclear security and legal instruments should actively seek to engage parliamentarians in future activities, including international conferences, noting the important role that parliamentarians can play in adhering to these instruments.
2. Parliamentarians' priorities should be understood and considered when engaging them in nuclear security. One promising path is to highlight peaceful uses of nuclear science and technologies - particularly non-power applications - in interactions with them, and stress the value of nuclear security in ensuring the continued use of these technologies.
3. Future events should be organised to bring parliamentarians and regulators (or national experts) together to discuss nuclear security in order to make progress towards the universalisation of legal instruments for nuclear security. Partnerships between organisations such as the IPU and the IAEA could be valuable in this regard.
4. Outreach on legal instruments for nuclear security should continue to be undertaken by multiple organisations to address various stakeholders and perspectives. These efforts should be well-coordinated by a single organisation, for example, the IAEA.
5. The use of interactive exercises and other game-based approaches should be encouraged for in-country use by regulators and other stakeholders for outreach with parliamentarians and other non-specialist audiences.
6. Future engagement with parliamentarians on this topic should seek to engage parliamentarians in other UN languages, such as French, Arabic, and Spanish, whether via interpretation or separate workshops.

The context for these six recommendations as well as six accompanying conclusions are set out in the body of the report, along with a detailed discussion of the need for universal adherence to legal instruments for nuclear security, information on the April 2024 high-level workshop, and possible next steps.

The International Legal Framework for Nuclear Security and the Need for Universal Adherence

The threat of terrorism and criminal acts involving nuclear material impacts all countries in the world. While the peaceful use of nuclear material has many potential benefits, for example, as a source of carbon-free energy, such material can also pose significant danger in the wrong hands. Universal adherence to and robust implementation of the [Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material \(CPPNM\)](#), its [2005 Amendment \(A/CPPNM\)](#), and the [International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism \(ICSANT\)](#) is an essential part to ensuring the security of nuclear material.

All States around the world have a stake in ensuring that the international legal framework for nuclear security is strong and effective. In addition to ensuring a minimum standard for the protection of nuclear and other radioactive material, universal adherence to these conventions would contribute to eliminating safe havens for malicious actors who seek to misuse nuclear and other radioactive material. This is due to the provisions criminalising offences involving nuclear and other radioactive material and requiring extradition of persons suspected or convicted of nuclear offences in other State Parties.

Outreach efforts, such as those undertaken by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as well as bilaterally by States Parties to the conventions have been successful in recent years. This outreach has raised international awareness and knowledge on the benefits to joining the CPPNM, its Amendment, and ICSANT, particularly at a technical and regulatory level, and has resulted in an impressive level of adherence to these instruments. As of 2 September 2024, out of 193 UN Member States, there were 164 Parties to the CPPNM, 136 to its Amendment, and 124 Parties to ICSANT.

To bring the remaining States into the fold, continued outreach is needed, and should be focused on the reasons why States that have not yet adhered have not done so. Notably, in many States, while the needed level of technical awareness may be in place, adherence to these treaties may not be a priority for political officials and for parliaments. In some cases, this has led to needed legislation for these conventions lingering in parliaments for months or even years before ratification takes place, even in States where the importance of the CPPNM and its Amendment is recognised within the nuclear regulator and/or Ministry of Energy. Examples include adherence to the Amendment to the CPPNM in the United States, Brazil, and South Africa.

Particularly in the case of the CPPNM and its Amendment, this situation can occur because parliamentarians in non-nuclear countries may question why a convention focused on protecting nuclear material has relevance to them when they do not have any nuclear material or plans to acquire any. Others may not wish to be associated with support for any legislation on nuclear technology, due to a lack of awareness of the benefits and a negative perception among their constituents, who may see nuclear as only associated with weapons. Others may prefer to keep the focus in the parliament on issues they see as more immediate, such as food security, climate change, or civil unrest, and are unaware of the link between nuclear security and these issues.

However, as we will discuss in the coming sections, these concerns have the potential to be addressed via effective, targeted outreach to parliamentarians. These parliamentarians may even be convinced to champion adherence to the legal instruments for nuclear security within their parliaments.

Engaging Parliamentarians in Efforts Towards Nuclear Security

Empowering members of parliament with knowledge on nuclear security issues and relevant legal instruments, including why these issues matter for their constituents' concerns, is essential for a strong international legal infrastructure for nuclear security. Although most parliamentarians are not aware of legal instruments for nuclear security, support from parliaments is typically necessary for adherence to and robust implementation of these legal instruments. This is due to three functions associated with parliaments around the world: oversight of the government, budgetary oversight, and approval of the ratification of international treaties and conventions.

Further, if parliamentarians are aware of the relevance of international nuclear security for their constituents, they can be essential allies in working towards the goal of universalisation.

In addition, parliamentarians can be particularly effective champions for nuclear security and associated legal instruments, given their political skills and national connections. Notably, individual members of parliament can communicate with their colleagues in terms they can relate to about the benefits of nuclear security, for example:

- Facilitating and supporting the adoption of nuclear technologies for power production as well as for agriculture, insect control, cancer therapy, and to mitigate the effects of climate change;
- Demonstrating their commitment to nuclear security to allies in the region and internationally;
- Deterring malicious actors from undertaking criminal and other unauthorised acts related to nuclear and radioactive material within their borders; and
- Having the tools to fight these criminal and unauthorised acts should they occur within their borders.

In the past, the international nuclear security community has undertaken some outreach to parliamentarians, but in a more limited way than for many other stakeholders. This is likely due to the technical nature of the topic and a perceived lack of interest on the part of parliaments. A notable exception includes several national parliamentary sessions related to the universalisation of ICSANT and some aspects of the CPPNM and its Amendment, organised by [Parliamentarians for Global Action](#), which have involved experts from UNODC, the African Center for Science and International Security (AFRICISIS), and the IAEA. In addition, the President of the IPU was recently invited to take part in a high-level panel at the IAEA's International Conference on Nuclear Security in May 2024, just weeks after the VCDNP/IPU high-level workshop had taken place.

To strengthen this engagement and develop recommendations for further engagement, the VCDNP and the IPU collaborated on an international workshop in Vienna to explore ways to strengthen the involvement of parliamentarians in nuclear security issues, and particularly in encouraging adherence to legal instruments for nuclear security.

The Goals and Design of the Workshop

The high-level workshop on legal instruments for nuclear security, held from 23 to 25 April 2024 at the VCDNP offices in Vienna, Austria, aimed to reach out to parliamentarians in select countries that had not yet adhered to the CPPNM and/or its Amendment, to raise their awareness of these instruments and ICSANT, and to seek their support as champions for these instruments in their own parliaments. The workshop was conceived of as a pilot activity, to spur further work in this area, and identify lessons learned, rather than as a stand-alone intervention.



Workshop participants on a guided tour of the IAEA Laboratories at Seibersdorf, Austria

The original project concept was designed by the VCDNP and funded by the US National Nuclear Security Administration (NNSA). However, early in the planning process, the VCDNP reached out to the IPU to draw on their extensive experience with parliaments around the world. Given its relevance to other ongoing work by the IPU in peace and security, the IPU proposed to fully collaborate on the workshop; an arrangement that was met with enthusiasm by the VCDNP and the NNSA, and that was key to the success of the workshop.

Nominations for potential participants in the workshop were distributed via a joint letter from the Secretary General of the IPU and the Executive Director of the VCDNP to speakers of parliament of all countries who had not yet adhered to the CPPNM and/or its Amendment. While ICSANT was also discussed in the workshop, a decision was made to limit the number of potential candidate countries for this first workshop, noting that future events would be able to focus on a broader selection of countries.

Via this letter, speakers of parliament were provided with information about the workshop and asked to nominate relevant members of their parliaments to attend. In parallel to this joint letter, the VCDNP undertook outreach to Vienna and Geneva missions and embassies of these countries as well as to foreign ministries and regulators in capitals, to promote broader awareness of the effort.

In response, nominations were received from 10 countries, of which participants from seven attended. The countries that joined the workshop provided a broad distribution of perspectives on nuclear security: Bahamas, Iraq, Mongolia, Somalia, Tanzania, Togo, and Zambia. The agenda was designed to both raise their awareness of the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear technology and the associated nuclear security risks and threats, and to discuss the international nuclear security infrastructure put in place to manage these risks and threats, and ensure the availability of the benefits.

Towards this end, a substantial emphasis during the workshop was placed on the benefits of peaceful uses of nuclear technology for the countries represented. IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi highlighted in his opening remarks the importance of peaceful uses of nuclear technology and the necessity of nuclear security to support them. In addition, the workshop featured a briefing by the director of the IAEA's Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy and a tour of the IAEA's nuclear applications laboratories in Seibersdorf, Austria. These topics proved to be of particular interest to many of the parliamentarians and several noted that they had been unaware of the potential contribution of nuclear technologies towards food security and climate change management, in particular.

The workshop also provided briefings to deepen the parliamentarians' understanding of other potential threats, notably via a briefing by Ms. Floriane Bacconnier, Head of the INTERPOL Permanent Observer Office to the United Nations in Vienna, and a scenario exercise led by Dr. Frank Wong of the US Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories. Both the briefing and the exercise demonstrated the links between nuclear smuggling and organised crime and terrorism, first via specific anecdotes

and information, and second, via a realistically constructed scenario that participants were led through. In both cases, the role of international legal instruments for nuclear security in addressing these threats was explained, with an emphasis on the relevance of these instruments to countries without significant quantities of nuclear material.

Additionally, in her briefings and in the discussions, H.E. Ambassador Brigitte Brenner, Representative of the IPU to the UN and other International Organisations in Vienna, stressed the importance of parliamentary champions in bringing legal instruments for nuclear security into force. This point was strengthened in a briefing by H.E. Ambassador Dr. Juan Francisco Facetti, Ambassador of Paraguay to Austria and Permanent Representative of Paraguay to the United Nations and other International Organisations in Vienna, who provided specific insights from his experience as a national champion for the CPPNM Amendment in Paraguay.

The VCDNP and the IPU also organised a panel discussing the various kinds of support available from international organisations for adherence to and implementation of legal instruments for nuclear security, featuring Dr. Elena Buglova, Director of the IAEA's Division of Nuclear Security, Ms. Peri Lynn Johnson, IAEA Legal Advisor and Director of the Office of Legal Affairs, and Mr. Roberto Arbitrio, Chief of the Terrorism Prevention Branch at UNODC.

Finally, the importance of nuclear security for the international community was highlighted in a discussion of the 2024 IAEA International Conference on Nuclear Security and next steps towards the second Conference of the Parties to the A/CPPNM with H.E. Ambassador Ian Biggs, Australia's Resident Representative, Governor to the IAEA Board of Governors, and Co-President of ICONS 2024, and H.E. Ambassador Benno Laggner, Ambassador and Special Advisor at the Permanent Mission of Switzerland to the OSCE, the United Nations, and other International Organisations Vienna, and Co-President of the 2022 A/CPPNM Review Conference.

The workshop was broadly considered a success by the participants. In an anonymous survey circulated at the end of the workshop, all participants rated the workshop as either excellent or very good and indicated that they would recommend it to their colleagues. Amongst the most highly-rated aspects were the information provided on peaceful uses of nuclear technology and materials, the visit to the Seibersdorf laboratories, and the expertise and backgrounds of the speakers.

The following are testimonials from the workshop participants:

“It was a very comprehensive workshop and the initiative to include MPs was fantastic!”

“It was important to bring MPs to the table to have this conversation in the same room as regulators.”

“We are looking for champions in our own countries who can champion this cause with the same passion you have done.”

Conclusions and Recommendations from the Workshop

As noted above, the workshop was designed as a pilot exercise to explore how to better engage with parliamentarians in nuclear security, and particularly how to gain their support for adherence to and robust implementation of legal instruments. Six conclusions and accompanying recommendations emerged from the workshop that could be of value for future interactions between parliamentarians and the international nuclear security community.

Outreach to Parliamentarians on Nuclear Security is Essential

None of the parliamentarians participating entered the workshop with a significant background in either nuclear issues or nuclear technologies. Some not only expressed that nuclear security was not an issue they were well-versed in, but also that their constituents tended to view all issues related to nuclear technologies as negative, as discussed further in the next section.

However, by the close of the workshop, several parliamentarians expressed the intent to discuss the topic of adherence to legal instruments for nuclear security further with their national technical experts and within their parliaments. In the closing session, multiple participants indicated their interest in championing adherence to the CPPNM and its Amendment within their parliaments.

To maintain this interest and to continue to build relationships with the parliamentarians involved, as well as to expand the model to other States, continued outreach will be needed. This could include further workshops or the inclusion of parliamentarians in key international conferences and other large meetings focused on nuclear security. This type of outreach could be particularly effective if undertaken directly by the international organisations that are experts in this area, such as the IAEA and UNODC.

While it is too early to estimate the effect of the April 2024 workshop in concrete terms – that is to say, additional adherences to the CPPNM, its Amendment, and ICSANT – follow-up work by the VCDNP and the IPU will seek to understand the effect of the workshop on the views of the parliaments that took part.

Conclusion 1: Parliamentarians have a key role to play in adhering to legal instruments for nuclear security, but are often unaware of nuclear security and its relevance to their countries.

Recommendation 1: Outreach on nuclear security and legal instruments should actively seek to engage parliamentarians in future activities, including international conferences, noting the important role that parliamentarians can play in adhering to these instruments.

Parliamentarians' Priorities Need to be Taken Into Account

As noted previously in this report, parliamentarians have a key role within their governments as representatives of their constituents and their priorities. When engaging with them, it is essential to keep this in mind and to underscore the aspects of nuclear security and legal instruments for nuclear security that have the potential to protect and improve the lives of their constituents.

In particular, nuclear technologies and the security risk associated with them are often perceived to be the domain of the developed world and of little relevance to developing nations. When communicating with parliamentarians, if the emphasis remains purely on the threat related to nuclear material, there is a risk of reinforcing this impression and causing them to consider that avoiding the topic in their countries is a good idea, both politically and practically.

In this case, a better route to engagement could be through discussing the benefits that nuclear technologies, particularly non-power applications, can provide. Notably, nuclear technologies can contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals and to alleviating real-life challenges in developing countries, such as food security and the mitigation of climate change.

Thus, while it is essential to continue to underscore the potential threat associated with nuclear and other radioactive material in the hands of criminal or otherwise malicious non-state actors, this message needs to be balanced by highlighting the benefits of nuclear technologies for improving daily lives. This provides parliamentarians with a positive message that they can bring back to their constituents regarding nuclear.



Workshop participants and organisers from the VCDNP and the IPU

This perspective was supported by discussions during the workshop, where the conversations surrounding the non-power applications of peaceful uses of nuclear technologies, such as agricultural and medical uses, were of particular interest to the parliamentarians in attendance. These topics were perceived to be directly relevant to many challenges that their countries and constituents are facing.

As an example, one participant in the workshop was dubious about the value of discussing nuclear security, emphasising that nuclear technology is, to local constituents, deeply bound to the concept of nuclear weapons and the danger of radiation, and a risky topic to raise, particularly as food security and other issues are far more pressing at this time. However, over the course of the workshop, this participant was particularly interested in the discussions of nuclear applications, including agricultural applications. By the end of the workshop, the participant stated that a briefing from the country's nuclear regulator on nuclear security and legal instruments would be requested for the parliament.

Conclusion 2: Parliamentarians typically are balancing multiple priorities and need to reflect the interests of their constituents. Nuclear issues, including nuclear security, may not be perceived as relevant to their countries and constituents, and could be viewed as a distraction from other, more urgent issues. They may also not be aware of the contributions nuclear science and technology can have in addressing their countries' urgent needs, including towards achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Recommendation 2: The priorities of parliamentarians should be understood and taken into account when engaging them in nuclear security. One promising path is to highlight peaceful uses of nuclear science and technologies - particularly non-power applications - in interactions with them, and stress the value of nuclear security in ensuring the continued and expanded use of these technologies.

The Importance of Connecting National Experts to Parliamentarians

In many countries, nuclear experts within countries that have not yet adhered to these instruments are supportive of doing so. However, adherence is often not a priority for their parliament, or there is a lack of awareness on the part of the parliament regarding legal instruments for nuclear security.

Further, these nuclear experts, including regulators, may have little access to parliamentarians. Thus, it could make a significant difference to provide opportunities for local nuclear experts, including the national regulator, to speak with parliamentarians and communicate the importance of nuclear security.

While messages directly from international organisations and high-level officials from other countries can be effective in raising awareness and increasing the likelihood of support for legal instruments, combining this with messages from local nuclear experts can multiply this effectiveness. The national body of nuclear security experts will likely be able to formulate effective arguments for parliamentarians in this area, as they are aware of the cultural dynamics and priorities of the countries. However, if they are not able to access parliamentarians, they will have limited success as champions for legal instruments within the parliament.

The potential effectiveness of this dynamic was demonstrated at the VCDNP/IPU workshop. For one country in attendance, both the head of the regulator and two parliamentarians joined the workshop. This permitted the regulator to engage individually with the parliamentarians on this topic, an opportunity that had been desired but was difficult to achieve in capital. The context of the workshop permitted the regulator to interact with the parliamentarians at a time when they were fully focused on the issue of legal instruments for nuclear security. Further, the regulator was able to supplement the discussion with specific details on the country's situation, and ultimately, to arrange for a briefing to parliament. In the months since the workshop, we have received indications from the regulator that this interaction was breaking down barriers to adherence in capital.

Conclusion 3: It can be highly effective to bring parliamentarians and regulators (or national experts) together to discuss the universalisation of legal instruments for nuclear security, as national experts can provide needed context both for parliamentarians and for the international experts organising and speaking at the event.

Recommendation 3: Future events should be organised to bring parliamentarians and regulators (or national experts) together to discuss nuclear security in order to make progress towards the universalisation of legal instruments for nuclear security. Partnerships between organisations such as the IPU and the IAEA could be valuable in this regard.

Outreach to Parliamentarians Needs to be Continuous and Coordinated

A further valuable aspect of the workshop was the involvement of parliamentarians from a country with very limited exposure to the global nuclear security community. In the case of this country, the lack of a nuclear regulator and nuclear experts complicates discussions on nuclear issues; however, it is a country with significant untapped uranium reserves and broad security concerns.

While raising awareness among parliamentarians in this and similar countries may not immediately result in adherences to the CPPNM, its Amendment, or ICSANT, it has the potential to raise awareness of this issue in the country and to facilitate future interactions with the parliament on nuclear security and legal instruments, paving a longer-term path towards universal adherence.

A lack of nuclear experts in some countries means that there may be no natural interlocutor who is aware of efforts in this area and receptive to discussions on nuclear topics. In this case, outreach to parliamentarians could be highly influential. As noted earlier in this report, some organisations are already working in this direction. However, additional efforts continue to be needed.

Raising awareness does not typically occur via a single interaction. Rather, a coordinated, repeated set of interactions with members of parliament in a given country is likely to be necessary to be truly effective. These interactions can take place via international organisations, bilaterally between States as well as via NGOs such as the VCDNP, each of which may address a slightly different angle of the issue. Through these various efforts, which would be maximally effective if well-coordinated, for example via the IAEA, it is more likely that these countries will choose to adhere in the future.

Conclusion 4: Awareness still needs to be raised regarding the importance and relevance of nuclear security and associated legal instruments in countries where engagement with the nuclear security community has historically been low. Different organisations may have different pathways to engage these countries, all of which could be valuable, particularly in countries where no natural nuclear security interlocutor is in place. However, these efforts need to be coordinated by a single organisation in order to avoid duplication and conflicts.

Recommendation 4: Outreach on legal instruments for nuclear security should continue to be undertaken by multiple organisations to address various stakeholders and perspectives. These efforts should be well-coordinated by a single organisation, for example, the IAEA.

Using Game-Based Approaches to Communicate with Parliamentarians

A portion of the workshop cited as especially successful by several participants was the presentation of a detailed scenario exercise. In this exercise, a criminal event involving nuclear material was played out in a step-by-step manner in three fictional States, with a number of pauses for audience input and discussion of possible decisions that could be made. The exercise was aimed at demonstrating to parliamentarians in a concrete way how the CPPNM and its Amendment can provide their States with the necessary tools to combat nuclear terrorism, as well as providing a scenario in which nuclear terrorism and criminal activity could affect even countries possessing no nuclear material.

The scenario exercise was initially developed by Dr. Frank Wong, a staff scientist at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories in the United States. The exercise has been used to great success to communicate with ministerial-level officials in more than 50 countries at the IAEA's International Conferences on Nuclear Security in 2016, 2020, and 2024. The exercise was adjusted by Dr. Wong to be specific to the interests of parliamentarians prior to the workshop, in coordination with VCDNP and IPU staff.

The workshop participants particularly appreciated the concreteness of the example provided by the exercise and noted that it enabled them to better understand how legal instruments for nuclear security could be relevant to their States. One participant expressed that this could be a useful tool for regulators, if they were able to use a similar type of scenario exercise to communicate with parliamentarians and other senior officials, ideally in their native language.

Conclusion 5: The approach taken by the scenario exercise was engaging as well as successful in helping parliamentarians in the workshop to understand how nuclear security is relevant to their countries. A similar “game-based” approach could be used by regulators and other organisations for outreach with parliamentarians and other non-specialist audiences, particularly if designed in a way that it could be easily translated into local languages. This could take the form of a video game available online, a physical game, or a hybrid of the two.

Recommendation 5: The use of interactive exercises and other game-based approaches should be encouraged for in-country use by regulators and other stakeholders for outreach with parliamentarians and other non-specialist audiences.

Reaching More Parliamentarians via Language Diversity

One shortcoming of the workshop was that it was convened entirely in English, due to a lack of resources to enable it to be convened in multiple languages. This limited the workshop’s ability to attract and engage fully with, for example, parliamentarians in French-speaking Africa and in the Middle East.

While it would be difficult to impossible to arrange for interpretation into all national languages, either convening workshops in other UN languages, such as Arabic, French, or Spanish, or arranging for interpretation could pay dividends in successfully communicating with parliamentarians.

Conclusion 6: Communicating with parliamentarians in local or regional languages could increase the effectiveness of outreach as well as the number of possible interlocutors.

Recommendation 6: Future engagement with parliamentarians on this topic should seek to engage them in other UN languages, such as French, Arabic, and Spanish, whether via interpretation or separate workshops.

Next Steps

For outreach on nuclear security to parliamentarians and other non-specialist senior officials to be truly effective, it needs to be undertaken at regular intervals, and involve a broad range of representatives from all States that have not yet adhered to the CPPNM, its Amendment, and ICSANT. We hope that this report, alongside the details of the workshop provided here, can assist others who would be interested in organising similar events in the future to continue and improve outreach to parliamentarians on nuclear security.

As noted in the conclusions and recommendations from the previous section, we urge organisations such as the IAEA to undertake joint work with the IPU to build on the results of this workshop with respect to the CPPNM and its Amendment. The IAEA's technical strengths and connections to regulators would provide the needed complement to the IPU's experience with parliamentarians and their interests, providing a unique opportunity for progress in this area.

Further, while this individual workshop has been completed, the VCDNP and the IPU will continue follow-up activities over the next six months to determine further the impact of the workshop in the countries in attendance, and plan to issue a follow-up brief summarising the perceived impact of the workshop towards the end of 2024.

Finally, the VCDNP will also explore potential ways in which the NGO community can continue to effectively support the work of the IAEA, UNODC, and others to ensure outreach in this area to parliaments around the world.



VCDNP organisers (right) with IAEA Director General Rafael M. Grossi and IPU Representative Ambassador Brigitte Brenner (left)



Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation

The VCDNP is an international non-governmental organisation that conducts research, facilitates dialogue, and builds capacity on nuclear non-proliferation and disarmament.



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