

22nd RCA Meeting of National Representatives
Mumbai, India
28 February – 3 March 2000

The 22nd RCA Meeting of National Representatives was hosted by India, under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), at Mumbai during 28 February to March 3, 2000, in co-operation with the Bhabha Atomic Research Center (BARC).

The Meeting was attended by 30 participants from 16 Member States (MSs), including 6 from India. The IAEA was represented by Dr. Adnan Shihab-Eldin, Director, Division for Africa and East Asia and the Pacific (TCPA), Technical Cooperation Department, IAEA; Mr. M.N. Razley, Head, East Asia & the Pacific Section (TCAPS), IAEA; and Dr.C.R.Aleta, RCA Coordinator, IAEA (Annexure-1)

The inaugural function and Sessions I and II were held at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) Campus at Trombay. All other Sessions were conducted at the Citizen Hotel, Mumbai.

1.0 Inaugural Function: Dr. R. Chidambaram, Chairman, Atomic Energy Commission and Secretary to the Govt. of India, Department of Atomic Energy, Dr. Anil Kakodkar, Director, BARC and other senior scientists and officials of the Department of Atomic Energy also participated in the function.

1.1 Mr. A.K. Anand, Director, Technical Coordination & International Relations Group and Reactor Projects Group, BARC & RCA National Representative, welcomed and introduced Dr. R. Chidambaram, Dr. Adnan, Dr. Anil Kakodkar and other delegates and guests.

1.2 Dr. Kakodkar, welcomed the delegates to India. He recalled RCA's genesis in the Tripartite Agreement between India-Philippines-Agency (IPA) project in 1963 involving the supply of Neutron Diffractometer by India and installed in the Philippines Research Reactor and used for the training of scientists from a number of countries in the region. Dr. Kakodkar noted that coming into force on 12th June 1972, RCA has successfully celebrated 25th anniversary in 1997 with 17 countries as Member States. He observed that RCA has contributed much to the sustainable development of this region using nuclear technologies in the fields of energy, agriculture, health and industry. He emphasized that India is always happy to play an active role in the RCA matters and has been participating in all the thematic and UNDP programmes. He noted that all efforts are being made to bring the benefits of nuclear technologies to the end users and to accelerate this effort active linkages have been established with other

national agencies and departments like Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), Central Electricity Authority (CEA), Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB), Hydrology Departments, and other professional bodies functioning in the country. He reiterated that India will be happy to enhance its contribution by hosting more RCA events, fellowships and training programmes. In conclusion, he invited the delegates to visit the various facilities in BARC and Board of Radiation & Isotope Technology (BRIT) and wished the delegates a fruitful meeting.

1.3 Dr. Adnan Shihab-Eldin, addressed on behalf of the IAEA. Conveying the greetings from the Director General of IAEA, he expressed his deep appreciation to India for organizing the meeting at BARC, a premier centre. He welcomed the delegates on behalf of the IAEA and the Director General and conveyed the greetings and best wishes of Mr. Qian Jihui, Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation, for a most successful meeting. He was happy to be in India and noted the venue of the meeting, Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, is testimony to India's capacity in nuclear technology. He added that India's achievements and potential were not limited to nuclear technologies but cover other important fields ranging from agriculture and energy to computer and information technology. Dr. Adnan informed that the Department of Technical Cooperation was currently working to appraise and process over 700 TC project proposals (more than 500 new) in order to formulate the TC programme for the 2001/2002 cycle, which will be submitted for consideration and approval of the Board in December. He emphasized that the key agenda item of the 22nd RCA National Representatives Meeting is the consideration of the RCA programme for 2001/2002. In this context he recalled the address of Mr. Qian Jihui in the last year's meeting in Singapore, the importance of good upstream work to identify and prepare a solid RCA programme. He stressed the need to apply Model Project Criteria for the 2001-2002 cycle as advised by the Board of Governors. He also informed the meeting about the inclusion of performance indicators to complement the Financial Implementation Rate. Before concluding, he once again acknowledged India's important and much appreciated participation in the Agency's work in general and in RCA programme in particular. He thanked Dr. Chidambaram, Dr. Kakodkar and Mr. Anand and colleagues for the excellent organization and gracious hospitality. Full text of the address is given in Annexure-2.

1.4 Dr. R. Chidambaram, in his inaugural and keynote address, said that he was extremely happy that the 22nd RCA National Representatives meeting is being held in India under the auspices of the IAEA. He said that it was a pleasant coincidence that the meeting was being inaugurated on February 28, which is celebrated in India as "Science Day" in honor of Dr. C.V. Raman, the

Nobel Laureate. He said that a series of programmes had been arranged as part of the Science Day celebration. He recalled India's relations with RCA activities since its inception. He emphasized that India believes from its own experience that development in the field of nuclear power sector acts as a catalyst and provides the impetus for accelerated development of non-power applications of nuclear energy in medicine, agriculture and industry directly and generates spin-off technological benefits. He noted that Human resource development has been an important component of India's our programme and that India is strongly committed to use the benefits of science and nuclear energy for social development. He emphasized that electric power is the prime mover of the national economy and social development. With increasing size and the standard of living of the population and the growth of industries, the demand for energy in the Asia-Pacific region is growing. With the rapid depletion of conventional fossil fuels and the growing concerns of the environmental issues, nuclear energy has become an inevitable option to many of the developing countries. When the issue of energy security is considered, the economics though important cannot be taken as the deciding factor. India, over the years, has generated expertise in various fields and created infrastructural facilities to sustain these developments, and would be very happy to share the same with other countries in the region. He was happy to note that India hosted 9 RCA events in 1999 and an increased number of experts contributed to RCA programmes. India is strongly committed to the RCA activities and will be happy to do so in future. He wished the 22nd meeting all success.

SESSION-I

(February 28, 2000; 11 15 – 13 00 hrs.)

Chairman: Mr. A.K. Anand

Rapporteur: Mr. C.A. Krishnan

2.0 Election of Chairperson

Mr. Tan Teng Huat, Singapore, took the interim Chairmanship of the Meeting. Mr. A.K. Anand, India, was unanimously elected as Chairperson, as proposed by New Zealand and seconded by Bangladesh.

The outgoing Chairperson Mr. Tan Teng Huat, Singapore, thanked the MSs for their support and confidence extended to him during the year and wished Mr. Anand, the incoming Chairperson, every success.

Mr. A.K. Anand thanked New Zealand and Bangladesh for their proposal. He thanked all the MSs for their kind support.

2.1 Adoption of Agenda

The RCA Co-ordinator presented the agenda for adoption after pointing out inclusion of “Presentation of RCA Regional Home Page” as item 2(e) under Session-IV and “Host Country Agreement” as the last item under Sr.No.7 of Session-IX. The modified agenda was adopted as proposed by Indonesia (Annexure-3).

2.2 Designation of Chairpersons

The Chairperson announced the names of the Session Chairpersons and Rapporteurs. This was agreed unanimously. (Annexure-4)

2.3 Follow up actions for 28th RCA GC Meeting

The follow-up actions arising from the 28th RCA General Conference Meeting, 26 and 29 September 1999, were then discussed. (Annexure-5)

2.3.1 Sunday General Conference Meeting

In the past two (2) years, the National Representatives scheduled a Sunday meeting prior to a Wednesday meeting. This was found necessary in view of the increasing number of agenda items. At the 28th RCA GC the issue of a formal official RCA meeting held on Sunday afternoon prior to the GC meeting on Wednesday was raised.

Several issues such as the need for the meeting, logistic inconvenience of a Sunday meeting, a full day meeting on Wednesday, late meeting on Monday or Tuesday etc., were considered. The meeting resolved that efforts should be made to establish prior communication regarding important issues and the requirement of extra meeting may be decided by the present and future Chairpersons and RCA Co-ordinator. The possibility of having a full day meeting may be explored first and the Sunday meeting should be considered only if it is absolutely essential.

2.3.2 Documents in the Guidelines and Operating Rules

The RCA GC wanted to review these documents for the Lead Country Concept for the RCA Programme within the Management of RCA. This topic was discussed in Session VIII.

2.3.3 Comments on the Draft Annual Report

The MSs were expected to submit their comments on the draft Annual Report prepared by Australia and Indonesia. This topic was discussed in Session IX.

2.3.4 List of RRU

The MSs were asked to (a) indicate and specify the particular institute and contact persons, and (b) comments on the RRU paper. This was discussed in Session IX. (See Session 13)

2.3.5 Hosting of events

The list of RCA regional events was circulated at the 28th RCA GC. MSs were asked to confirm the venue and dates. An updated list for 2000 events was circulated for confirmation by MSs.

2.3.6 List of postponed activities in 1999

The meeting noted that the list was already circulated in 1999.

2.3.7 Projects for the next cycle

It was proposed that there will be a presentation on projects under Thematic Program for the next project cycle. This was discussed under Session-V and VIII.

2.3.8 Adoption of criteria for selecting representatives to the Tripartite (ARCAL, AFRA, RCA) Meeting

The RCA Co-ordinator explained the background and said that at present five Representatives are participating from each group in the Tripartite meeting. From RCA, the past, present and future chairmen, TCDC Co-ordinator and one other national representative participated. He noted that the composition and criteria for the selection of representatives for future meetings required to be agreed. Malaysia and the Philippines were requested to work out the details for further discussion under session-VII.

2.3.9 Streamlining of programmes for 2001/2002

At the 28th RCA GC, MS would like to ensure that the programme for 2001/2002 is streamlined into several sectors, and that each sector is balanced and properly represented. A detailed discussion was carried out regarding the strategies and policies to be adopted for prioritizing of programmes. The

Meeting noted and recognized the need for evaluating the past performance as well as future needs under the backdrop of the TC strategy and Model Project Criteria. The Meeting noted the detailed exercises carried out during the AGMs for Agriculture in China and for Industry in Mumbai as examples.

It was agreed that the Lead Countries should talk to other National Project Coordinators before considering this aspect under session-V.

2.3.10 Review of new project proposals for the next cycle

The review of the new proposals and identifying projects for the next cycle was taken up in Sessions IV and V.

2.3.11 Reserve fund allocation

The request to MSs to provide an indication on how the reserve fund could be allocated in which projects and activities was discussed under Session III.

2.4 Adoption of the 28th RCA GC Meeting

The Report of the 1999 RCA General Conference Meeting was adopted subject to editorial corrections as pointed out by Australia.

SESSION-II

(February 28, 2000; 14 00 – 18 00 hrs.)

3.0 Technical Visit and Demonstration

3.1 Technical Visit

The delegates visited the research reactor DHRUVA, the Medical Sterilisation Plant ISOMED, Isotope and Food Irradiation Facilities in the BARC campus at Trombay, the spice irradiator and other facilities of the Board of Radiation and Isotope Technology (BRIT) unit located at New Mumbai.

3.2 Demonstration

A demonstration of accessing the TC-PRIDE database at Vienna using Internet from Trombay was carried out. Special arrangements were made at the Vienna computer center and BARC computer center to facilitate this demonstration to illustrate the possibility of using RCA related databases by MSs.

The RCA MSs were informed by DIR-TCPA that he will follow-up on the requirements for asking the database available to MS.