

63rd Annual Sessions of the IAEA General Conference
Quadripartite Forum Meeting of Regional Agreements
(AFRA, ARASIA, ARACAL and RCA)

Friday 20th September 2019 from 14.30 to 16.00 hrs at Meeting Room No. A0433

Minutes of the Meeting:

The Quadripartite Forum Meeting between the four Regional Cooperative Agreements, AFRA, ARASIA, ARCAL and RCA has taken place on Friday 20th September 2019 from 14.30 to 16.00 hrs at Meeting Room No. A0433, on the margins of the 63rd Annual Session of the IAEA General Conference.

These 04 Regional Cooperative Agreements promote and strengthen the application of nuclear technology for regional developments. The objective of the Quadripartite Forum is to share information, best practices and experiences, as well as to explore common areas of inter-agreement collaboration.

The meeting was attended by the Chairs of the Four Agreements, and was chaired by ARASIA. Chair of ARASIA made a few opening remarks and passed on the chance to The AFRA Chair. He also made a few opening remarks.

Welcome remarks were delivered by Mr Dazhu Yang, IAEA Deputy Director General and Head of the Department of Technical Cooperation, who highlighted the importance of the Agreements as pillars for the facilitation of regional cooperation among their States Parties. He noted that the Agreements provide a very effective framework to enlarge the contribution of nuclear science and technology to the socioeconomic development of their regions and States Parties. He thanked all for attending the Friday meeting which translated to the committed to see the QF move forward. He noted that the RAs had made a lot of progress in individual achievements and worked on new documents.

Chair of AFRA mentioned that AFRA was successfully continued to promote and strengthen the application of nuclear technology for the development of the region and was celebrating its 30 years. To commemorate it an Exhibition stall was taken place during the week of General Conference

Chair of ARCAL explained that it has begun to prepare for 35th Anniversary and it has played a major role in TC and the agency was requested to continue to support to them. He further stated that the QF allowed the RAs to work and share experiences form the different set up in the RAs.

Last year the RAs identified areas of cooperation. QF was attended by high levels officials to demonstrate how serious they took the business of QF.

The QF was the best place to show best practices of the RAs and in 2019 attended 02 training courses with RCA and AFRA. He reiterated the willingness to cooperate on a S-S basis listing some of the common areas for thematic focus. Further, he proposed an interregional meeting in Vienna to share plans and methodologies and invited key institutes on NST from the regional agreements for the same.

RCA Chair took the floor to thank the QF for a good platform and looked forward to another year of collaboration.

RCA Chair explained that the RCA, for research, development and training related to NST for Asia and the Pacific established in 1972 and now have 22 member countries. RCA has a long history of providing an effective framework for regional cooperation bringing socioeconomic benefits to the Governmental parties of the region. It has not only delivered projects that have transferred a wide range of beneficial of NST but it has also demonstrated the power of these technologies to contribute to the sustainable development and enhanced socioeconomic well-being in the region.

RCA Chair further stated that RCA would celebrate its 50th Anniversary in 2022 in Vietnam organizing an exhibition parallel with proposed Ministerial meeting. The objective of the QF is to discuss and agree on possible follow-up cooperative activities accordingly, RCA would give its fullest cooperation to success the activities of QF.

Director- TCAP, congratulated the forum for their different capacities demonstrated and willingness to share. He asked the QF to promote advocacy, encouraged collaboration and focus on HRD. He promised to support AFRA to continue to strive for these ideals in various areas of cooperation. He mentioned that there were many tools already developed for the different RAs to benefit from and there was no need to reinvent the wheel.

Director TC-RCA, stated that it was a good opportunity to be here with excellent exchange and dialogue, He mentioned that 02 arrangements ARASIA and RCA made moves on capacity building on commonalities such as the Youth in Nuclear.

Director TC-LAC mentioned that there were many commonalities - the needs are increasing and the resources are diminishing. QF was a new way of using limited resources. The Technical Directors should work together and for the interregional agreements to encourage each other in shared success.

Chair of Programme Management Committee (PMC) presented the progress of 2018-2019 as below.

Issues	Work-in-progress/Actions Taken / Planned
ARCAL - Noted that just as national profiles were done, Regional profile should also be described:	Such a technical document and strategy would serve as a good follow up, presented with table and graphs on relevance and ease of execution
Regional Documentation that could be shared should be placed on the website for access by the different FP of the other Regional Agreements.	AFRA Website just went operational Action will be done by end of 2019
At the Inter-ministerial meetings in November, there is the possibility that all of regions will be in Vienna and could brain storm on resource mobilization.	Not actioned - we became busy with AFRA 30 th Anniversary and HLPS in Aswan
The QF needed to be capture in the guidelines and procedures or the Regional Agreements	PMC has captured it in revised procedures and guidelines
AFRA to watch out for and be open to inviting other regions to their training courses	Done, only ARCAL Responded
Need for RCF 2019-2023, alongside the plan of activities needs to be shared with other regions	Shared
AFRA to host the QF - 2019	Done

After presentation of the progress by PMC the discussion continued as below.

1. Chair of ARASIA requested for Focal Points to produce tangible actions undertaken.
2. FP-RCA mentioned that mechanisms have been established for promotion of participation in Training courses. Work Plans has been shared, but not in good time. RCA and ARCAL shared 02 nominations from Brazil and Argentina for training in New Zealand.
3. FP-ARCAL stated that all FP had met and shared works plans and Calendars on training courses. She iterated that these WPs had to be developed by November and shared by December to that expression on interest be completed by January to February 2020. ARCAL has proposed 02 candidates from Ecuador to attend AFRA trainings. The QF was a good pilot on coordinated dissemination strategies for information gathering. QF cooperation in a good tract. Need 1-2 years to assess the pilot cooperation activities.
4. FP-AFRA said that ARCAL expressed interest to train 02 persons in Egypt and this work in progress would do placements in March 2020.

5. Chair of ARCAL emphasised that the nominations and expression of interest need to be done early so that the invited participants are including in the host country agreements, for them to be invited.
6. Section Head -TCLAC mentioned that common projects from the different RA by field of practice would be the most strategic way to focus. The exchange of work plans would be a new way to share expertise.
7. AFRA Chair suggested that meetings and workshop be included in the shared documents such as the YIN in secondary school and universities, which AFRA is about to initiate.
8. Chair of ARASIA suggested of getting ready for the next cycle of projects with cross cutting activities from the onset of the planning process. There are new facets of S-S cooperation at all levels – managerial, exchange of experts, fellowship and scientific visits. All regions need to participate in the new project cycle taking into account the timing. RAs could be involved in an Inter-Regional Projects of grand nature such as in Nuclear Medicine, Environment, Soil/Hydrology etc. Proposed the 2022/2023 TC cycle for a cooperation project framework within which to develop mechanism of this interregional project as another platform for a big flagship cooperation.
9. Section Head-TCLAC reiterated that we need to develop a matrix of common issues including information about training courses and workshops. We could get the Technical Officers of the different regions to help in these aspects.
10. PMC Chair said that regional profiles were suggested in the last meeting a year ago as well a joint resource mobilisation strategy. These profiles could be the starting point to develop the big flagship projects. Other regions were invited to the HLPS in Aswan Egypt, and this is the time to send in the nominations of those to attend.

The meeting ended at 15.40 with the proposition for ARCAL to chair the QF in 2020. After the meeting a group photo was taken of the participants.

Recommendations:

1. More possibilities of training opportunities between the Agreements could be shared according to common languages, such as Arabic, English, Portuguese and French.
2. Participants to be considered it was highly relevant to avoid duplication of activities under each Agreement when addressing the various needs for capacity building in different countries.