



REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT

**INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY
AGENCY**



REPORT OF
THE 36th RCA GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETING

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IAEA Headquarters
Vienna, Austria

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ACRONYMS

AFRA	African Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARASIA	Co-operative Agreement for Arab States for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
ARCAL	Regional Co-operative Agreement for the Advancement of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
CRP	Co-ordinated Research Project
DDG-TC	Deputy Director General, Technical Cooperation
DDG-NA	Deputy Director General, Nuclear Applications and Research
DIR-TCAP	Director for the Asia and the Pacific Region
ENO	Electronic Networking and Outreach
GCM	RCA General Conference Meeting
GOR	RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
MS(s)	RCA Member State(s)
MTS	RCA Medium Term Strategy
NR(s)	National RCA Representative(s)
NRM	Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
OLA	Office of Legal Affairs
PLCC	Project Lead Country Coordinator
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RCARO SAC	RCARO Standing Advisory Committee
RFP	RCA Focal Person
SAGTAC	Standing Advisory Committee on Technical Assistance and Cooperation
SH-TCAP-1	Head of Section 1 of the Asia and the Pacific Region
SH-TCAP-2	Head of Section 2 of the Asia and the Pacific Region
TCAP	Division for Asia and the Pacific
TCDC	Technical Cooperation among Development Countries
TCNLO	National TC Liaison Officer
TSLCC	Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinator
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

INTRODUCTION

The 36th RCA General Conference Meeting was held on the 14th of September 2007 at the IAEA Headquarters in Vienna, Austria. Thirty three participants from the 17 RCA Member States; Australia (AUL), Bangladesh (BGD), China (CPR), India (IND), Indonesia (INS), Japan (JPN), Republic of Korea (ROK), Malaysia (MAL), Mongolia (MON), Myanmar (MYA), New Zealand (NZL), Pakistan (PAK), the Philippines (PHI), Singapore (SIN), Sri Lanka (SRL), Thailand (THA), Vietnam (VIE), and the representatives of RCA Regional Office (RCARO) attended the Meeting.

Mr. Werner Burkart (DDG-NA), Mr. Manase Peter Salema (DIR-TCAP), Mr. Zhang Jing (Section Head, TCAP-1) and Mr. Prinath Dias (RCA Focal Person) represented the IAEA. Ms. Ana Maria Cetto, (DDG-TC), who was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments, was represented by Mr. Salema. Agency's Technical Officers, Project Management Officers of TCAP and support staff also attended.

The list of the participants is given in Annex 1.

I. Opening

I.1 Opening Remarks by the RCA Chair

The RCA Chair, the National RCA Representative of Australia, Dr. Ron Cameron, welcomed the participants and the invitees and thanked DDG-TC, DDG-NA and DIR-TCAP for continuing interest in, and support for the RCA Programme. He also thanked the RCA Focal Person, Prinath Dias for his consistent support for the RCA and his tireless efforts to ensure good outcomes for the programme. He said he looked forward to making good progress at the Meeting in pursuit of RCA goals set out in the Medium Term Strategy, of demonstrating effective management of the RCA and of choosing projects for 2009-11. He emphasized the very important role, and also the associated responsibilities of NRs in ensuring the achievement of RCA goals. He said the other major issues for the Meeting arose from the report on the role and status of the RCARO and the need to discuss the proposed outcomes from the workshop on future strategies of the RCARO for wider engagement by the RCA with other funding organizations.

He said that he was sure with the contributions of the delegates and the support from the Agency, the objectives of the Meeting could be achieved. The Opening Remarks of the RCA Chair are given in Annex 2.

I.2 Messages from the IAEA

The Chair invited Mr. Werner Burkart (DDG-NA) to deliver his message.

The DDG-NA thanked the RCA Member States for the invitation extended to him to address the RCA GC Meeting. He congratulated the MSs on the progress made and positive achievements during the past year in the various fields of nuclear sciences and applications. He stated that it was clear that the region had made human health a priority area and mentioned cancer treatment, Distance Learning Programme for Nuclear Medicine Technologists and Missions of Quality Assurance Team for Radiation Oncology (QUATRO) as key RCA activities in this sector. He referred to the

activities undertaken under the PACT Programme and requested the RCA Member States to support them. Referring to the progress in the Agricultural Sector he mentioned exchanges of varieties of food and crops among RCA Member States and actions taken to address problems of soil erosion and water.

The Message of DDG-NA is given in Annex 3.

The Chair invited Mr Manase P. Salema (DIR-TCAP) to deliver the message on behalf of Ms. Ana Maria Cetto (DDG-TC).

In her message, the DDG-TC thanked the RCA Member States for inviting her to attend this Meeting and apologized for not being able to attend due to other unavoidable commitments. She mentioned the decision to limit the number of RCA Projects to 15 would serve RCA Member States well and noted that RCA Guidelines displayed a considerable commitment and ownership on the part of RCA Member States. She further stated that the Implementation Rate of 74% of last year was one indication of the success of the measures taken by the Member States to improve the RCA Programme. She also mentioned that Workshop organized by the RCA Regional Office had resulted in the development of further strategies on establishing partnerships with other organizations. She mentioned the strategic approach to partnerships for technical cooperation the IAEA and the regional agreements or groupings of Member States were now taking, and said that the approach adopted by each particular region either through the development of Regional Strategic Profiles or through Medium Term Strategies, would result in strengthened regional programmes, and would optimize horizontal coordination. She said that it was encouraging to note that RCA's Regional Programming was in step with this approach. She hoped that the RCARO remains an entity owned and managed by the Member States and stated the Agency would support the efforts of Member States to strengthen the role of the RCARO within the provisions of the RCA Agreement. She wished a successful Meeting and said that she looked forward to learning about the outcome of the deliberations.

DIR-TCAP making a few remarks of his own stated that the Secretariat of the RCA resides in the Division for Asia and the Pacific and the inputs of the Agency were coordinated through the RCA Focal Person Mr. Prinath Dias. He acknowledged that without the technical and scientific inputs from the technical departments in the IAEA it would not have been possible to discharge the responsibilities of the Technical Cooperation Department. He said this was important because the RCA Programme like the entire TC Programme was technically and scientifically based. He expressed his appreciation to the Department of Nuclear Science and Applications, Department of Nuclear Safety and Security, and the Department of Nuclear Energy.

The Message of DDG TC is given in Annex 4.

I.3 Adoption of Agenda – RCANRM(36)/1

The revised Agenda, which was circulated to the participants, was adopted with the amendment to have the Lunch Break at 1300-1400 to enable some of the participants to attend religious observances. The adopted Agenda is given in Annex 5.

The Meeting agreed to adopt the Agenda with the above-mentioned changes.

I.4 Appointment of rapporteurs

The Chair informed that Mr. H. Rikihisa of the RCA Secretariat will be the rapporteur of the Meeting.

II. Matters arising from the 29th Regional Meeting of National RCA Representatives – Sydney, Australia 20-23 March 2007– RCAGCM(36)/2

At the invitation of Chair, the RCA Focal Person presented the Background Paper RCAGCM(36)/2 summarizing the status of implementation of the decisions taken at the 29th NRM. He brought the attention of the Meeting to the table containing statistics of the Progress Reports submitted by the Member States for the period January-June 2007, and requested the assistance of the National RCA Representatives to ensure all the National Project Coordinators submitted the Progress Reports on time. The Chair endorsed this request and requested the RCA Focal Person to indicate the projects each Member State was participating in when presenting the statistics on Progress Reports.

The status of the submission of Progress Reports should be presented to the future NRMs along with information on which projects the Member States are participating in.

III. RCA Programme in 2009-2011-RCAGCM (36)/3

At the invitation of Chair, the RCA Focal Person summarized the procedure adopted for developing Project Concept Papers for 2009/2011 TC cycle and stated that the involvement of the National RCA Representatives in developing the programme had significantly increased over the past few years. He said that since the RCA Medium Term Strategy required the number of projects for 2009/2011 to be fifteen and since eight projects would continue from the previous cycle, there would be room for seven new projects. He also stated that he had received the evaluation of the Project Concepts from AUL, which had been circulated to the National RCA Representatives prior to the Meeting. He further stated that the priority orders for the Project Concepts received from JPN and SIN had been distributed to the delegations. He gave a short presentation on the IAEA Criteria for Screening TC Project Concepts. The presentation is given in Annex 6.

The Chair sought views of the Member States regarding whether the fifteen projects should include the RCA Project on Management of TCDC and the projects implemented by RCARO. The consensus was that they should not be included.

The Meeting decided that the RCA Project on Management of TCDC and projects implemented by RCARO should be in addition to the fifteen projects to be implemented in 2009/2011.

The Chair stated that AUL has made an evaluation of the Project Concepts, which had been circulated. He also said that the priority order of the projects had been received from JPN and Singapore and it would be necessary to know the priorities of the other Member States. He proposed a short discussion on each of the projects to facilitate the decision on the priority order of the Concept Papers.

The Chair invited each Project Lead Country to present the proposed Project Concepts.

1. Concept Paper on “Improvement of radiotherapy for common cancers in the region”

Project Lead Country - JPN

At the invitation of the Chair, JPN gave a short introduction to this project and stated that treatment of cancer was becoming more and more important for the region. JPN also stated that according to WHO, if proper action was not taken, approximately 70% of the cancer deaths would be in low and middle income countries. JPN further stated that this project, on the basis of previous projects implemented had taken into account the demands and other criteria in its formulation.

BGD, IND, CPR, PAK and ROK expressed support for this project. PHI considered it to be of medium priority.

The RCA Focal Person suggested that the project could also assist Member States to improve their current practices in addition introduction of new techniques as proposed in the Concept Paper.

2. Concept Paper on “Nuclear Power Infrastructure”

Project Lead Country – ROK

ROK, introducing the Concept Paper stated that it addressed the growing need for nuclear energy in the region. ROK further stated that it had a nuclear power programme with a high degree of self-reliance and its experience could be shared with the other Member States.

IND, PHI, VIE, INS, BGD and MAL expressed support to this Project. PHI, MAL, INS and IND were of the opinion the project could benefit from the experience of the other Member States with nuclear power programmes in addition to the ROK, and the objectives should be accordingly revised. NZL indicated that it did not consider Nuclear Power as a priority area, but recognized the right of the other countries to use nuclear power if they considered it as a viable option. AUL stated that the Agency had a very large programme in this project area with the participation of several RCA Member States and expressed concern about this project duplicating the other Agency efforts.

PHI requested more information on the Agency programmes on nuclear power. At the invitation of the Chair, DIR-TCAP stated that currently there were three regional projects directly related to nuclear power, in addition to projects on nuclear safety. He said two of the projects were for countries that already have nuclear power programmes and the third project was to assist the Member States in planning and strengthening nuclear power infrastructure. He further said that currently the Agency was in the process of identifying the needs of the Member States. He said that as in the previous TC cycle, the Division for Asia and Pacific would take into consideration all the requests received through RCA and outside RCA and prepare the programme avoiding duplication. AUL stated that the Department for Nuclear Power of the IAEA had organized two major meetings this year, one of which was for Member States planning to introduce nuclear power and comprehensive documents had been prepared on this topic.

3. Concept Paper on “Assessment of Trends in Fresh water Quality”

Project Lead Country – PAK

PAK introducing this Concept Paper stated that the proposal was to extend the current RCA Project on water resources and it should be given a high priority. Replying to a question from the Chair, PAK said that this project required a long-term study to collect data, and if the current project were closed at this stage, it would not be possible to meet the objectives.

PAK, PHI, and NZL expressed support for this project. The National RCA Representative of JPN expressing his personal opinion stated that he considers this project to be of importance for the region. JPN stressed the importance of internal support systems in this regard.

4. Concept Paper on “Application of Nuclear Techniques in Marine Pollution Studies”

Project Lead Country - PHI

The Chair requested PHI to introduce this Concept Paper. PHI stated that the thrust of this proposal was for the RCA to integrate and consolidate what had been undertaken in the past two or three cycles. PHI also stated that it would be advantageous at this stage for the RCA to prepare a manual on techniques that were used to monitor marine pollution.

SIN and NZL expressed views in support of this project.

5. Concept Paper on ” Radiation Processing”

Project Lead Country – MAL

The Chair requested MAL to introduce this Concept Paper. MAL stated that the project was aimed at using radiation processing technology to enhance agricultural production and to mitigate environmental pollution. MAL further stated that the products should be marketable for them to be of benefit to the end-users.

AUL stated that the project seems to be aimed at producing a commercially marketable product, and such commercial activities were not normally supported by the RCA.

PHI stated that it supported this project since it would assist the Member States to produce usable products from natural resources. PHI also stated that the element of regional cooperation had been very high in the previous projects in this project area. JPN noted that FNCA had a similar project and that FNCA considered this to be complementary project, and stated that it gave this project a high priority.

6. Concept Paper on “Irradiation for Enhanced Phytosanitary Treatment of Regional Products for Export”

Project Lead Country – AUSTRALIA

AUL introduced this Concept Paper and stated that the project was aimed at improving the trade of irradiated products of economic importance, within the Asia and Pacific Region. AUL further stated that chemical phytosanitary treatments were being phased out and use of radiation for this purpose has become an important issue. AUL also stated that the purpose of the project was to introduce regionally harmonized procedures and protocols and the project will be implemented in conjunction with the Asia and Pacific Plant Protection Commission.

PAK pointed out that all RCA Member States did not have irradiation facilities. PHI and SRL expressed support for this project and stated that it would support their current programmes in Food Irradiation.

7. Concept Paper on “Animal Nutrition / Reproduction”

Project Lead Country – IND

IND introduced this project at the request of the Chair and stated that animal nutrition and reproduction was very important for the region and the projects in this area implemented during the previous cycles have contributed significantly. IND further stated its strong support for this project.

AUL expressed difficulty in supporting this project because of the high research component and stated this could be more appropriate to implement this project under the Coordinated Research Programme. PHI supported the views expressed by AUL.

8. Concept Paper on “Raising Productivity in the coal, mineral and related industries using nuclear analytical systems”

Project Lead Country – AUL

AUL introducing this project stated, that techniques developed by Commonwealth Industrial and Scientific Research Organization of Australia (CSIRO) based on PGNA (prompt gamma neutron activation analysis) to analyse mineral products would be transferred to the other Member States through this project.

IND stated as the Thematic Sector Lead Country for Industry it found difficult in supporting this project since there had not been significant developments in this technology in the recent past.

AUL stated that it was not a technology development project but a technology transfer project.

9. Concept Paper on “Process optimisation in Petrochemical and Chemical Industries using radiotracers and radiation”

Project Lead Country – CPR

CPR introducing the project stated the project was on applying radiotracers and sealed sources for advanced diagnosis of multi-phased systems, which was a common concern in petrochemical and chemical industries.

IND expressed its support for this project and stated that in petrochemical and chemical industries the downtime was of utmost importance and this technology would reduce down times, thus reducing economic losses. AUL expressed difficulty in supporting the project since it appeared to be for the benefit of private industry. IND

re-iterated its support for the project and stated that there was a well-established relationship between the national nuclear institute and petrochemical and chemical industries extending over a period of more than two decades and also it could be similar for other Member States.

MAL agreed with the views expressed by IND, and said that eventually all projects would benefit the industries and the benefit to the national nuclear institutes would benefit through licensing thus contributing to sustainability.

10. Concept Paper on “Application of advanced Industrial Radiography and Tomography in Industry and Civil Engineering”

Project Lead Country – IND

Introducing this project, IND stated that new techniques are evolving in this project area that can be used to identify defects in industrial and civil engineering structures in a non-destructive manner for which there is a strong need. IND declared its strong support for this project.

11. Concept Paper on “Production of Radiopharmaceuticals”

Project Lead Country – PAK

PAK introduced this project at the request of the Chair and stated that it had a multi-faceted approach to solving problems in industry and health. PAK further stated that a high priority should be assigned to this project, since if this technology were developed; it would benefit all the Member States.

AUL stated that the focus of the project was not precise and it should be made more specific. AUL further stated that it was drafted as a technology driven project rather than a needs driven project and the needs to be addressed through this project had to be identified.

The Chair stated that the views of the Member States on all projects except on the Project on Animal Nutrition / Reproduction appeared to be diverse, and suggested prioritisation of the projects using the form that had been distributed to the NRs. All Member States (except MYA and VIE, who were represented by their Permanent Missions) submitted their order of priority to the Secretariat as requested by the Chair. The overall priority rating of the projects based on the priority order submitted by each Member State is given in Annex 7.

The Chair stated that the next step in the process was to carry out the detailed design of the projects. He said that the project on Nuclear Power should have more focus on TCDC. He also said in the Research Reactor area there should be a better-defined project, since the focus was rather vague as it stood. The Chair suggested the submission of the first nine projects to the Agency. It would also be necessary to compare the RCA projects with other regional projects to ensure there were no overlaps. He further said that the detailed project designs would be reviewed at the next Regional Meeting. He also said that the projects not considered by RCA should not be submitted to the Agency as non-RCA projects. He further said that there was a better chance of a project being considered by the Agency for implementation under hard-core funding, if it were well designed with clear outcomes that would lead to the expected impact.

The Meeting decided on the priority order of the Projects given in Annex 7 and decided to submit the first nine Project Concepts to the Agency for project design development and potential incorporation under the Technical Cooperation Programme of 2009/2011.

The Meeting also decided to review these Project Designs at the 30th NRM in accordance with the Procedure for Project Development of the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules.

IV. Progress of the Implementation of RCA Medium Term Strategy – RCAGCM(36)/4

The Chair stated that the RCA Medium Term Strategy (MTS) required establishment of a national advisory body and an RCA Office in each Member State to support the National RCA Representative along with a process for providing guidance to NPCs and PLCCs. The Chair requested each National Representative to report on the current status of implementing these requirements.

SIN reported the National RCA Representative communicates with NPCs using electronic media and through meetings. SIN had established an advisory body for nuclear science and technology. SIN reported since its applications were limited to human health and industry, National Thematic Sector Coordinators had not been appointed.

PAK reported that it had a well-established RCA office under the supervision of the National RCA Representative with one Director and one other officer. The National RCA Representative had access to an Advisory Committee comprising experts on all thematic areas. PAK also held meetings with NPCs when the need arose.

THA reported that the National RCA Representative maintained good contacts with the NPCs but had difficulties in getting them to submit the Progress Reports. Action was being taken to remedy the situation. THA also reported that an RCA Office had been established at the OAP.

SRL stated the RCA Office was established in the Atomic Energy Authority and regular consultations were held with the NPCs. SRL reported that there was a difficulty in receiving the Progress Reports on time from the NPCs.

PHI reported that it had a staff for supporting RCA activities functioning under the supervision of the Director of PNRI who also serves concurrently as the National RCA Representative. PHI also had a Technical Assistance Evaluation Committee which helped the National RCA Representative with the projects. The Committee comprised of experts in agriculture, physical sciences and industry. There was a separate advisory committee for medical projects. PHI also used its intra-net for progress reporting and as a repository for training materials.

NZL reported it had limited resources for the RCA activities and therefore could not afford a structure with high overheads. Due to this reason NZL focused on few projects, which were considered very important to NZL. NZL also reported that most of the NPCs belonged to the organization of the National RCA Representative, which

made it easy to maintain good communications. Communication with those who were outside the organization, especially before and after important meetings was by electronic mail.

MYA reported that RCA activities in MYA were coordinated by the Department of Atomic Energy.

MON stated it had appointed National Project Coordinators for the project MON was participating in.

JPN stated that one staff member had been appointed to support the National RCA Representative, and had a Liaison Officer in Permanent Mission of JPN in Vienna. JPN as the TSLC for the Human Health Sector had appointed an Advisory Committee comprising 10-20 experts, and this Committee met at least twice a year. JPN further stated that it was participating in the RCA projects as a contributor and consulted with the relevant government agencies when the need arose.

INS stated that the National RCA Representative was supported by the TCNLO and by a staff member in the Permanent Mission in Vienna. INS further stated that it planned to send one officer to the RCARO this year as a temporary staff member.

IND stated that an RCA Office had been established staffed by two dedicated officers, supported by administrative staff. There was an apex committee to advice on technical matters and since IND was the TSLC for the Industrial Sector. End-users from the industrial sector were also invited to attend the meetings of this apex committee.

ROK stated it was the host country of the RCARO and was continuing to strengthen communication between the National RCA Representative and the NPCs. ROK also stated that the expert organization for international cooperation KONICOF had designated a person to handle these issues with the assistance of senior advisors.

MAL stated that the National RCA Representative was assisted by an RCA Secretariat comprising two staff members and the TCNLO. The National RCA Representative also received assistance from the IT unit, which was maintaining the RCA Members Only Homepage. Briefing and de-briefing sessions were conducted with NPCs before and after Meetings of National RCA Representatives. Linkages were also maintained with research management centres.

CPR stated the RCA Office was established in the CPR Atomic Energy Authority. A Working Advisory Group comprising NPCs and well-experienced experts had been established to advice the National RCA Representative on technical matters.

BGD stated that the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission functioned as the National RCA Representative and the Director for International Affairs who worked under the Chairman attended to work related to the RCA, in addition to other duties. The Director was supported by ten staff Members. The NPCs met the National RCA Representative every three months and reported on the progress of the RCA projects. The Directors of the Atomic Energy Commission operated as an advisory body for RCA activities. BGD also stated that a detailed report on RCA activities in BGD had been submitted to the RCA Secretariat.

The Chair stated there seemed to be a variety of ways of managing RCA activities in the Member States. The Chair stressed the importance of having an RCA Office and holding regular meetings with NPCs, which should ensure timely submission of progress reports. The Chair also said the concept of having an Advisory Group, which interacts with end-users, and other key users, was also important.

The Meeting decided that the National RCA Representatives should take action to maintain an appropriate organizational structure to ensure the effective implementation of the RCA Programme as outlined in the RCA Medium Term Strategy.

V.1 Report of the Director RCARO on the Workshop on Future Strategies of the RCARO –RCAGCM(36)/5

At the invitation of the Chair, Mr K-M Choi, the Director of the RCARO gave a brief presentation on the main outcomes of the Workshop on Future Strategies of the RCARO held in July 2007. He said the main objectives of the Workshop, the report of which had been circulated, were to identify means of seeking partnerships with the other Agencies and to decide on the follow-up project after completion of the UNDP (Korea) funded project on Tsunami. He said the National RCA Representatives of some of the Member States, invited experts, RCA Focal Person, Director of the IAEA/FAO Joint Division, representatives of the Ministry of Science and Technology of ROK and representatives of UNDP (Korea) attended the Workshop.

Dr. Choi summarized the main conclusions and recommendations of the Workshop and said that the Workshop identified specific organizations and specific project areas for establishing partnerships. He also said the RCARO SAC considered the report of the Workshop at its last Meeting and agreed with the conclusions and the recommendations. Mr. Choi's presentation is given as Annex 8.

The Chair stated the two major issues the Workshop addressed were promotion of RCA activities and establishment of partnerships. With regard to promotion, he said it was necessary to develop a promotional plan to identify Meetings and Conferences RCA should attend along with follow-up actions. He said information on RCA activities should be provided on a regular basis to persons with whom contacts would be established at these Conferences and a database of these contacts made should be maintained. With regard to establishing partnerships he said all organizations identified by the Workshop, other than the IAEA / FAO joint Division were located in either THA or PHI and requested the National RCA Representatives of these two Member States to assist the RCARO in establishing contacts with these organizations.

The Meeting agreed with the recommendations of the Workshop and decided they should be implemented.

V.2 Report of the Chair of the RCARO SAC

The RCA Chair, who also functioned as the Chair of the RCARO SAC, briefed the Meeting on the outcomes of its 5th Meeting held on the 13th of September 2007.

Selection and Appointment of Director RCARO

The Chair stated that the current Director of RCARO would not be able to continue in this post beyond his current term due to other commitments. He said that the Selection Committee appointed to assist the SAC in the selection and appointment of next Director of the RCARO met in July and had produced a job-description, terms and conditions of the appointment, and a Vacancy Notice. The SAC had reviewed these documents and approved them with some amendments. He said the Vacancy Notice and the other documents would be circulated to the National RCA Representatives and would be posted on the RCA web-sites.

Replying to a query made by NZL the Chair said if there were a time gap between the end of the term of the current Director and the appointment of the new Director, a senior staff member of the RCARO would function as the Acting Director.

RCA Success Stories

The Chair said that five RCA Success Stories had been published and another six have been drafted for publication in the future. He said the SAC reviewed the drafts and decided that four of them could be submitted for editorial review. The other two Success Stories needed to be re-written after obtaining further information from the PLCCs. The Chair said a Success Story should state the problem that was addressed, what was done to solve the problem and what the impact was. He said the SAC had recommended the use of a template for future Success Stories and he would contact Mr. Tim Hayden, who edited the first batch of Success Stories in this regard.

Survey of end-users

The Chair stated that the RCARO conducted a survey to identify end-users in the Member States and the inter-national conferences suitable for participation, but had received only six responses, which was rather disappointing. It would be helpful if the National RCA Representatives could provide this information to the RCARO as early as possible.

RCA Brochure

The Chair said that the RCA Brochure had been circulated for comments before the publication of the next edition. He said it would be revised based on the comments received and on further consultations mainly on technical aspects and would be finalized before the end of September for publication in October.

The Minutes of the RCARO SAC Meeting are given in Annex 9.

The Meeting accepted the recommendations of the RCARO SAC and decided they should be implemented.

V.3 Report of the RCA Working Group on the Role and Status of the RCARO – RCAGCM(36)/6

Referring to the decision of the 29th NRM to appoint a Working Group to look at the issue of enhancing the role and status of the RCARO, the Chair reported that the Working Group met in July and identified eight possible options, which were listed in Annex 10. The Chair summarized these options and stated that the Working Group recognized that it would not be possible for the RCA to grant the status of an international organization to the RCARO but was sympathetic to the fact that the

RCARO did not have a clear mandate to act on behalf of RCA in contacting funding organizations.

The Chair said the Working Group recommended Option 8, which was the adoption of a revised resolution by the RCA General Conference Meeting. He said that the draft resolution had been circulated with the Background Papers of the Meeting. He further stated the Working Group requested the RCA Focal Person to seek views of the IAEA Office for Legal Affairs and the TC Department regarding Option 3, which was the operation of the RCARO as a regional office of the Agency's RCA Programme. He said the Working Group also recommended for the consideration by the RCA General Conference Meeting, the viability of a supplementary agreement recognizing the RCARO and sought the views of the Meeting regarding the recommendations of the Working Group.

JPN expressed the view that the draft resolution did not reflect what was discussed at the Working Group Meeting and noted that the revised resolution submitted by JPN had been circulated by the RCA Focal Person.

PAK stated it was of the view that the main issue was the immunities and privileges of the Director of the RCARO and therefore an internal matter for the Member State hosting the RCARO. PAK also stated the draft resolution, with the amendments proposed by JPN was acceptable and any reference to legal status of the RCARO should be deleted. PAK further stated that the reference to the Director RCARO in the operative paragraphs should be changed to RCARO and some of the statements in the preambular paragraphs were not relevant. PAK also stated that the resolution could be amended to express the appreciation of the contribution of the Government of the ROK more strongly.

IND endorsed the excellent work done by the RCARO and expressed willingness to discuss the draft resolution on the lines of the proposal made by JPN.

MAL inquired whether the reference in the resolution was to RCA GCM or to the IAEA General Conference. The Chair clarified that it was the RCA GCM.

At the invitation of the Chair to comment on the legal aspects on options 3 and 4, Ms. Mona Khalil of the Office of Legal Affairs of the IAEA stated that these two options were the same from the legal point of view. She said both options would require approval of the Board of Governors of the IAEA and possibly of the IAEA General Conference. She also said that this option would result in the Regional Office being subject to IAEA rules and regulations.

AUL stated it was difficult for it to support these two options since it was contrary to the desire of the MSs for the management of the RCA to reside with the Member States.

(Continued discussion after adjournment for Lunch and Prayers)

The Chair stated that the views expressed by the Member States seemed to indicate that they were not in favour of a formal agreement that would confer legal status on the RCARO and requested confirmation of this conclusion. There were no comments to the contrary.

The Chair suggested the use of the resolution as a means of achieving one of the requirements, namely ensuring the RCARO had a mandate to act on behalf of the RCA when negotiating with the funding organizations. Based on the previous comments the Chair suggested deletion of the 4th operating paragraph of the resolution. He also suggested maintaining the operating paragraph 1 since it was necessary to confirm that the RCARO had the authority to act on behalf of the RCA to fulfil the mandate given by the Member States.

IND proposed amendment of the first operating paragraph by replacing the wording “Director RCARO *has the authority* to act on behalf of the RCA” by “Director of the RCARO *will continue* to act on behalf of the RCA”. The Chair said that it would be necessary to have a very direct statement to say that the RCARO had the authority to act on behalf of RCA.

NZL inquired whether the mandate given by the Member States to the RCARO was documented in the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules. The Chair confirmed it was in the Guidelines and Operating Rules.

PAK said that there was an alternate proposal from JPN and stated that PAK preferred it as the basis for the discussion. The Chair invited comments from JPN in this regard and since there were no comments from the delegation of JPN, the Chair stated it would be difficult to carry forward this proposal. Replying to a question from PAK the Chair stated that he had been informed JPN agreed to carry on the discussion on the basis of the original draft as long as necessary modifications were made to reflect its views, although JPN considered the revised proposal was a more accurate reflection of the WG meeting.

PAK stated the words “mandate” and authority” given in the operative paragraph should be defined. The Chair stated the mandate could be defined as “to negotiate with funding bodies, and to promote the RCA”. PAK queried the RCA Focal Person as to when the word “negotiate” had been added to the mandate of the RCARO. The RCA Focal Person stated the mandate of the RCARO was originally defined in the Working Paper on the establishment of the RCARO and revised at subsequent Meetings of the National RCA Representatives.

The Chair suggested the revision of the operating paragraph 1 of the resolution to define the mandate as what was stated in the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules. Replying to a query from IND the Chair stated that it was necessary for the RCARO to be able to say that it had the authority to speak on behalf of the RCA, when negotiating with funding organizations.

PAK stated the reference in operative paragraphs 2 and 3 should be to the RCARO and not to the Director RCARO. PAK also stated that referring to the RCA Secretariat as the RCA Secretariat of the Agency was superfluous. The Chair pointed out that the reference in the RCA GOR was to the RCARO Director and not RCARO. MAL said that it would not be consistent to refer to the Director RCARO since the reference in paragraph 3 was to the RCA Secretariat and not to the RCA Focal Person. The Chair agreed with the views expressed by PAK and MAL.

The Meeting agreed to the draft resolution with the following amendments.

- 1. Confirms that the Director of the RCARO has the authority to act on behalf of the RCA in order to fulfil its mandate given by the RCA Member States, *as set out in the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules*;**
- 2. Requests all RCA Member States to provide necessary support to the Director of the RCARO to that effect with their best capacity; *and***
- 3. Requests the RCA Secretariat of the Agency to continue *extending* cooperation and liaison with the Director of the RCARO.**
- 4. ~~Request all RCA Member States to take the necessary step to designate the RCARO as an international organization.~~**

The revised resolution is given in Annex 11.

VI. RCA Regional Meeting of National Representatives 2008 and 2009

VI. 1. 30th RCA Regional Meeting of National Representatives, Vietnam 2008

At the invitation of the Chair VIE stated that the 30th Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives would be hosted by VIE and was planned to be held in Hanoi or Hanmai from Tuesday 8th to Thursday 10th April 2008. The venue would be selected by the Host Country. The Chairs Meeting and the Meeting of the RCARO SAC would be held on the Monday 7th April 2008.

The Meeting decided to hold the 30th RCA NRM in Vietnam on 8 –10 April 2008.

VI. 2. 31st RCA Regional Meeting of National Representatives 2009

At the invitation of the Chair JPN confirmed that the 31st Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives would be hosted by JPN.

VII. Any other business

IND thanked the Chair and the RCA Focal Person for conducting the Meeting in an amicable manner. IND also stated that Nepal and Palau have become IAEA Member States and these two countries could be invited to join the RCA. DIR-TCAP stated that if the Member States gave the Agency the mandate, these countries could be invited to join the RCA. He also said that the Agency would provide the new Member States and the Member States, who joined the Agency a few years ago but were not active, information about the IAEA including the TC Programme and encourage them to participate in IAEA activities. The Chair stated that the RCA Secretariat could approach these two countries to find out what their interests were and make them aware of the RCA.

The Meeting decided that the RCA Focal Person should contact representatives of Nepal and Palau to find out whether they would be interested in joining the RCA.

PAK remarked that the statement in the report of the RCARO Working Group Meeting that the RCA was not a legal entity is incorrect, since it was a legal entity under the international law and therefore the report should not be made public.

AUL informed the meeting that the University of Sydney has established a programme to support the use of the Distance Learning Material prepared under an RCA project on an ongoing basis, and is willing to make this opportunity available to RCA Member States.

VIII. Closing

The Chair, in his closing remarks, thanked all the National RCA Representatives for their cooperation. He thanked the Technical Cooperation Department, the Department of Nuclear Applications and Research for supporting the RCA Programme. He also thanked the RCA Focal Person for his contribution to the Programme. He said the RCA Member States valued having a dedicated Focal Person for the RCA Programme and expressed the wish that this arrangement would continue into the future.

Mr. M.P. Salema, on behalf of the Deputy Director General, Technical Cooperation Ms. Ana Maria Cetto, thanked the RCA Member States for their cooperation and support for the Technical Cooperation Programme. He further said that cooperation with RCA was very vital and was in line with the TC Strategy. He said that it had been a pleasure to work with the RCA Member States and looked forward to continue working with the Member States.

The Chair conveyed his best wishes to all the delegates and closed the Meeting.