



REGIONAL COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT
INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY



REPORT OF
THE 51st RCA GENERAL CONFERENCE MEETING

**Meeting Room CR1,
IAEA Headquarters Vienna,
Austria**

23 September 2022

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ACRONYMS

ANPC	Alternate National Project Coordinator
CRP	Cooperative Research Project
DDG-TC	Deputy Director General, Technical Cooperation Department
DIR-TCAP	Director for Asia and the Pacific Division
DIR-RCARO	Director of RCA Regional Office
EBT	Extra Budgetary
FNCA	Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia
GCM	General Conference Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
GP	Government Party to the RCA Agreement
IAEA BOG	IAEA Board of Governors
LCC	Lead Country Coordinator
MTSC	Mid-Term Strategy Coordination
NPC	National Project Coordinator
NPT	National Project Team
NR	National RCA Representative(s)
NRM	National RCA Representatives Regional Meeting
PCMF	TC Programme Cycle Management Framework
PPAR	Project Progress Assessment Report
QF	Quadripartite Forum
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCA GOR	RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules
RCA PAC	RCA Programme Advisory Committee
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RCARO SAC	RCARO Standing Advisory Committee
RCA-FP	RCA Focal Person
RRC	Research Review Committee
TACC	Technical Assistance and Cooperation Committee
TC	Technical Cooperation Programme
TCPC	Division of Programme Support and Coordination
UNOSSC	United Nations Office for South-South Cooperation
WG	Working Group

Introduction

The 51st RCA General Conference Meeting was held at the IAEA Headquarters, Vienna, Austria, on 23 September 2022.

The Meeting was attended by representatives from 20 RCA Government Parties: Australia (AUL), China (CPR), Cambodia (KAM), India (IND), Indonesia (INS), Japan (JPN), Korea (ROK), Laos (LAO), Malaysia (MAL), Mongolia (MON), Myanmar (MYA), Nepal (NEP), New Zealand (NZE), Palau (PLW), Pakistan (PAK), Philippines (PHI), Singapore (SIN), Sri Lanka (SRL), Thailand (THA) and Vietnam (VIE). Representatives from the RCA Regional Office (RCARO) also joined the Meeting.

Mr Hua Liu (DDG-TC), Ms Jane Gerardo-Abaya (DIR-TCAP), Mr Gashaw Gebeyehu Wolde (SH-TCAP1), Ms Marina Binti Mishar (SH-TCAP2) and Mr Sinh Van Hoang (RCA-FP) represented the IAEA.

The list of participants is given in **Annex 1**.

Opening

a. Opening of the 51st RCA GCM by the RCA Chair (Vietnam)

Mr. Tran Chi Thanh, President of Vietnam Atomic Energy Institute (VINATOM), the RCA Chair and NR of VIE, officially opened the Meeting. His speech is provided in **Annex 2**.

b. Welcome Remarks by the DDG-TC, IAEA

Mr Hua Liu, Deputy Director General and Head of Department of Technical Cooperation, IAEA, delivered his statement. His speech is provided in **Annex 3**.

c. Welcome Remarks by the DDG-NA, IAEA

Ms Najat Mokhtar, Deputy Director General and Head of Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications, IAEA, delivered her statement. Her speech is provided in **Annex 4**.

1. Adoption of the Agenda – RCAGCM(51)/1

The Meeting adopted the provisional agenda with no amendment (**Annex 5**).

The Meeting adopted the agenda with no amendment.

AUL, VIE and RCARO were appointed as Rapporteurs for the Meeting.

2. Report on the preparation of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA by the RCA Chair – RCAGCM(51)/2

The RCA Chair presented on report on the preparation of the 50th Anniversary of the RCA ([Annex 6](#)).

The Meeting took note of the progress made for the preparations for the 50th Anniversary of the RCA including the Ministerial Level Meeting, RCA exhibition, RCA Awards, publications (reports of Socio-economic Impact Assessment of RCA Programme, RCA History, and RCA Newsletters) and RCA Anniversary Video. The Meeting highly appreciated the hard work done by the STF.

The Meeting took note of the final agenda for the Ministerial Level Meeting. Time for the keynote speech session was adjusted and the speech order was rearranged to incorporate all GPs’ representatives’ capacity to deliver remarks.

3. Report on the preparation of RCA Scholarship Programme by the Chair of the Committee – RCAGCM (51)/3

The RCA Chair presented on the preparation of the RCA Scholarship Programme ([Annex 7](#)).

The Meeting took note of the report on the preparation of RCA Scholarship Programme and highly appreciated the efforts of the Committee on conducting the Feasibility Study (FS).

While all Government Parties agreed in principle the establishment of an RCA Scholarship Programme, several countries raised queries on the feasibility and sustainability of the proposed Scholarship Programme – particularly in relation to funding, allocation of scholarships, provision of in-country support, and the legitimization of this programme under the operative rules of the RCA.

While many GPs agreed to move forward with launching a pilot scholarship programme, several GPs requested that an in-depth feasibility study should be conducted prior to the establishment of Scholarship Programme.

The Meeting recommended that the pilot programme could go ahead with Government Parties willing to implement this programme in their country from 2023.

In parallel, the committee should continue detailed discussions with the other Government Parties and address all their concerns.

4. Report of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee by the RCA PAC Chair – RCAGCM(51)/4

The RCA PAC Chair provided report on the RCA PAC ([Annex 8](#)).

The Meeting took note of the report of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) and appreciated their contribution. The RCA PAC recommended that the NRs encourage the NPCs to submit progress reports in a complete and timely manner.

The Meeting endorsed the work plan for finalization of the project design for RCA Programme for 2024/25 as follows;

Time frame	Activity
31 st August 2022	Uploading of the first draft of project designs on PCMF
1 st September – 16 th November	Review of the project designs by IAEA staff
December / January	Further consultations with LCCs to improve project designs
February 2023	Project Design Meeting
March / April 2023	Revision of project designs based on the IAEA quality enhancement exercise
17th May 2023	Final submission on PCMF

The Meeting endorsed the work plan for monitoring of the implementation of the RCA Programme of 2022/23 as follows;

Time frame	Activity
November 2022	Invitation by LCCs of six-monthly progress reports from NPCs
December / January	Assist LCC in preparing the PPARs
March 2023	Assist LCCs in preparing presentations / reports to the NRM

The Meeting approved the proposed format for LCC reports given in Annex 9 and revised version of Annex 16 of the RCA GOR given in Annex 9.

The Meeting took note of the suggestions made by RCA PAC for the MTS 2024-29 and approved the representation of MTSC WG, RCARO and PAC in the Working Group on drafting the MTS 2024-29.

5. Report of the WG on the RCA 2018-2023 MTS Coordination by the WG Chair – RCAGCM(51)/5

The Chair of the WG on the RCA 2018-2023 MTS Coordination reported on the report of the WG. (Annex 10).

The Meeting took note of the report of the WG on the RCA 2018-2023 MTS Coordination and appreciated the hard work done by the WG.

The Meeting approved the following recommendations by the WG;

- Should the MTS 2024-2029 not be ready in 2024, the current MTS 2018-2023 is deemed extended until the new MTS 2024-2029 is available. An

accelerated action by the MTSD with a definite timeline to complete the new MTS is imperative.

- The 12th WG Meeting be held in person/virtually in January or February 2023 to consolidate the results of the limited final review, prepare the report on the limited final review, and formulate recommendations to the WG MTSD.
- The Final Review of the current MTS be conducted in early 2026, and the results be reported to the 2026 GCM.

The Meeting also approved documentation of best practices and timelines in developing the MTS and all associated components, and the inclusion of these in the strategic review of the GOR approved by the 44th NRM.

The Meeting endorsed the updated WG Work Plan for 2022 as given in Annex 11.

6. Report of the WG on drafting RCA 2024-2029 MTS by the WG Chair – RCAGCM(51)/6

The Chair of the WG on drafting RCA 2024-2029 MTS reported on the report of the WG. (Annex 12).

The Meeting took note of the report of the WG on drafting RCA 2024-2029 MTS.

The Meeting noted the progress made for drafting the 2024-2029 MTS and endorsed the updated list of WG members, with replacement of some members.

The Meeting endorsed a newly proposed Work Plan as follows;

Time frame	Activity
December 2022	The MTS consolidated Draft for the WG review
January 2023	The MTS First Draft for NRs review & comments
May 2023 (45th NRM)	The MTS Second Draft for NRs review & comments
September 2023 (52nd GCM)	The MTS Final Draft for NRs review & endorsement

7. Report of the RCA Regional Office (RCARO) by the RCARO Director – RCAGCM(51)/7

The Director of the RCARO provided the report on the activities of the RCARO (Annex 13).

The Meeting took note of the report of the Director of the RCA Regional Office. The Meeting congratulated the 20th anniversary of the RCARO and appreciated the RCARO for the contributions made over the last 20 years.

8. Report of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) by the RCARO SAC Chair – RCAGCM(51)/8

The Chair of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) presented the report of the 35th Meeting of the RCARO SAC ([Annex 14](#)).

The Meeting took note of the report of the 35th Meeting of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee (SAC) and endorsed its recommendations as attached in [Annex 14](#).

9. Update on the holding of the 45th Meeting of National RCA Representatives in Australia in 2023; and the 46th Meeting of National RCA Representatives in China in 2024

AUL confirmed that the 45th NRM will take place in Australia in 2023.

CPR confirmed that the 46th NRM will take place in China in 2024.

AUL confirmed that the 45th NRM will be held from 8 to 12 of May 2023, in Sydney, Australia.

CPR confirmed that the 46th NRM will be held in China in 2024, with the exact dates to be confirmed in due course.

10. Any Other Business

The RCA Chair suggested to have the below item to be discussed under Any Other Business.

- How to increase the ownership and leadership of the RCA

THA emphasized the importance of the strong support of each stakeholder of the RCA for the success of the RCA.

PHI suggested that considering the global energy crisis RCA should consider having the nuclear energy component to the future strategic areas.

WG MTSC Chair clarified that nuclear power is already included as a thematic area in the RCA MTS 2018-2023 but there is no project existing. The Meeting noted the significance of having activities/projects in the area for further development of the nuclear science and technology in the region.

11. Closure

The RCA Chair thanked all participants for their active participation and valuable contributions, and declared the meeting adjourned.