



**REGIONAL COOPERATIVE
AGREEMENT**

**INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC
ENERGY AGENCY**



REPORT

**37th MEETING OF THE NATIONAL RCA
REPRESENTATIVES**

16–19 March 2015

Islamabad, Pakistan

Table of Contents

List of Annexes	i
Acronyms	ii
Introduction	1
Inauguration Ceremony	1
1. Selection of New RCA Chair/Rapporteurs.....	1
2. Adoption of the Agenda (RCANRM(37)/1).....	2
3. Reports on Follow-up Actions of the 43 rd GCM (RCANRM(37)/2)	2
4. RCA Annual Report for 2014 (RCANRM(37)/3).....	2
5. Implementation of the RCA Programme.....	3
a. Review of the implementation of the RCA Programme in 2014 (RCANRM(37)/4).....	3
b. Planned arrangements of regional events in 2015 (RCANRM(37)/5)	3
6. Review of the Progress of the RCA Projects in 2014 (RCANRM(37)/6).....	4
7. Report of the RCA PAC on the situation and quality of RCA project documents submitted to IAEA under the 2016-2017 TC Cycle - (RCANRM(37)/7).....	7
a. Report of the RCA PAC on the situation and quality of RCA project documents submitted to the IAEA under the 2016 – 2017 TC Cycle.....	7
b. Report of the RCA PAC on the advantage and disadvantages of a four year project cycle (RCANRM (37)/8) and Annex-2	8
8. Report of the Working Group on the preparation of the RCA Medium Term Strategy and Strategic Priorities 2018-2023 (RCANRM(37)/9) and Annex-3.....	8
a. Report of the results of the RCA MTS Survey	8
b. Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the RCA Medium Term Strategy and Strategic Priorities 2018–2023.....	9
c. Discussion of the Report of the Expert Group Meeting	9
9. Report of the Working Group on the Proposed Amendments to the RCA Agreement – RCANRM(37)/10	10
10. Report of the Director RCARO (RCANRM(37)/11) and Annex-3	10
11. Report of the Chairman of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee – (RCANRM(37)/12)	10
12. Report of the WG on the future of RCARO (RCANRM(37)/13) and Annex-3	10

13. Report on the Collaborative Activities between RCA and FNCA in 2014 by the National Representatives of the Project Lead Countries (RCANRM(37)/14) and Annex-3	10
14. Presentation on FNCA activities by Mr. Sueo Machi, FNCA Coordinator of Japan (RCANRM(37)/15)	11
15. Update on Status of Acceptance of the Fifth Agreement to Extend the 1987 Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA) (RCANRM(37)/16)	11
16. Arrangements for the 44 th RCA GCM, the 38 th and the 39 th RCA NRMs.....	11
17. Adoption of the Meeting Report of the 37 th National Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives.....	11
18. Closing.....	11

List of Annexes

Annex-1	List of Participants
Annex-2	Project progress presentations by Lead Country Coordinators
Annex-3	Presentations on various topics made in the Meeting
RCANRM(37)/1	Meeting Agenda
RCANRM(37)/2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) RCA Programme Advisory Committee (PAC) Report on the review of the template for recording “In-kind” contributions for the RCA Annual Report 2014 - Follow-up Actions b) 37th RCA NRM - Follow-up Actions
RCANRM(37)/3	2014 RCA Annual Report
RCANRM(37)/4	Review on the Implementation of the RCA Programme
RCANRM(37)/5	Planned Arrangements of RCA regional events in 2015
RCANRM(37)/6	Project Reports
RCANRM(37)/7	Report of the RCA PAC
RCANRM(37)/8	Report of the RCA PAC on the advantages and disadvantages of a four year project cycle
RCANRM(37)/9	Report of Expert Group Meeting on the RCA Medium Term Strategy and Strategic Priorities
RCANRM(37)/10	Report of the second meeting of the Working Group on Proposed Amendments to the RCA Agreement
RCANRM(37)/11	Report of the Director of the RCARO
RCANRM(37)/12	Report of the 20 th RCARO Standing Advisory Committee Meeting
RCANRM(37)/13	Report of the Working Group on the Future Role of the RCARO
RCANRM(37)/14	Collaborative activities between the RCA and the FNCA
RCANRM(37)/15	Presentation on FNCA activities by Mr. Sueo Machi, FNCA Coordinator of Japan
RCANRM(37)/16	Update on Acceptance of the 5 th Extension of the RCA Agreement

Acronyms

BoG	Board of Governors
DIR-TCAP	Director for Asia and the Pacific Division
DIR-RCARO	Director of the RCA Regional Office
FNCA	Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia
GCM	General Conference Meeting of the National RCA Representatives
GOR	Guidelines and Operating Rules
GP	Government Party to the RCA Agreement
MS(s)	Member State(s)
NR(s)	National RCA Representative(s)
NRM	National RCA Representatives Regional Meeting
LC	Lead Country
LCC	Lead Country Coordinator
PCMF	TC Programme Cycle Management Framework
PMO(s)	Programme Management Officer(s)
PPAR	Project Progress Assessment Report
PUI	Peaceful Uses Initiative
RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCA PAC	RCA Programme Advisory Committee
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RCARO SAC	RCARO Standing Advisory Committee
RCA-FP	RCA Focal Person
TC	Technical Cooperation Programme
TCAP	Division for Asia and the Pacific
TCF	Technical Cooperation Fund
TO(s)	Technical Officer(s)

Introduction

The 37th National RCA Representatives Meeting (NRM) was held in Islamabad, Pakistan from 16 to 19 March 2015. The Meeting was attended by thirty-two (32) participants from fifteen (15) RCA Government Parties (GPs): Australia (AUL), China (CPR), India (IND), Indonesia (INS), Japan (JPN), Malaysia (MAL), Myanmar (MYA), Nepal (NEP), Republic of Korea (ROK), New Zealand (NZE), Pakistan (PAK), the Philippines (PHI), Sri Lanka (SRL), Thailand (THA), and Vietnam (VIE). Three representatives of the RCA Regional Office (RCARO), the Chair of the RCA Programme Advisory Committee (RCA PAC), and Mr. Sueo Machi from FNCA also attended the Meeting.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was represented by Ms. Najat Mokhtar, Director of the Asia and the Pacific Division (DIR-TCAP), and Mr. Sinh Van Hoang, RCA Focal Person (RCA-FP).

The list of participants is given in [Annex 1](#).

Inauguration Ceremony

An inauguration ceremony took place before the first session of the 37th NRM. The ceremony was chaired by Mr. Ansar Parvez, Chairman of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC). The audience was comprised of representatives of various organizations relating to nuclear science and technology, foreign diplomats and meeting participants.

During the ceremony, Mr. I.H. Bokhari, RCA contact person (PAK), briefly introduced the RCA Programme and outlined the objectives of the meeting. Ms. Najat Mokhtar, DIR- TCAP, welcomed all National Representatives (NRs), especially the ones who were participating in an NRM for the first time, and other representatives of the RCA GPs. Furthermore, she welcomed Mr. Kun-Mo Choi, Director RCARO and Mr. Sueo Machi, FNCA Coordinator, and recognized their continued commitment and support to the RCA. She extended her gratitude to the government of Pakistan and PAEC for the outstanding meeting arrangements which provided an excellent platform to exchange views and share experiences maximizing the cooperation among the RCA GPs. Finally, she recognized the efforts of the three RCA Working Groups which were established to enhance the efficiency and sustainability of the RCA Programme.

Mr. Syed Shaukat Hasan, NR of Pakistan, reminded the meeting that the RCA had grown to 22 Government Parties and warmly welcomed the newly joined Lao People's Democratic Republic. He emphasized the advantageous regional collaboration under the RCA and pointed out that Pakistan has been a leading country in many of the RCA thematic areas. Lastly, he wished all the participants a fruitful meeting. Mr. Ansar Parvez, Chairman PAEC, welcomed all guests and especially thanked Ms. Najat Mokhtar for attending the Meeting. He acknowledged the developmental role of the IAEA and recognized that the RCA has been a key actor in the promotion of regional knowledge exchange and shared solutions for common problems that can be tackled with the usage of nuclear science and technology.

1. Selection of New RCA Chair/Rapporteurs

Mr. Chris Daughney (NZE), the RCA Chair, participated in the Meeting via video link. He opened the session by thanking PAK for hosting the NRM and the IAEA for its assistance in organizing it. Mr. Daughney expressed his satisfaction with the numerous successes of the RCA Programme in the past and expected the number of achievements to grow even further in

the future. The RCA Chair then called for nominations for the new Chair of the RCA. Malaysia proposed Mr. Syed Shaukat Hasan to be the new RCA Chair. The suggestion was agreed by consensus. The new RCA Chair thanked Mr. Chris Daughney for his contribution during his Chairmanship tenure. Lastly, Mr. Syed Shaukat Hasan stated that the RCA Programme has been very beneficial and effective in assisting GPs to enhance the peaceful uses of nuclear technology in the past.

PHI, MAL and PAK volunteered to be the rapporteurs, and the selection was agreed by all participants.

Syed Shaukat Hasan, NR of PAK, was unanimously elected as the new RCA Chair. Ms. Alumanda Dela Rosa (PHI), Ms. Rohaizah Ahmad (MAL) and Mr. Ghiyas ud Din (PAK) were appointed rapporteurs for the Meeting.

2. Adoption of the Agenda (RCANRM(37)/1)

The Chair informed the Meeting that minor changes in the schedule of project presentations had been proposed by some NRs. The meeting accepted those proposals.

The Meeting adopted the agenda with a slight modification in the schedule of project presentations.

3. Reports on Follow-up Actions of the 43rd GCM (RCANRM(37)/2)

At the invitation of the RCA Chair, the RCA-FP provided a summary of the most important follow-up actions arising from the above meeting report. Mr. John Easey, Chair RCA PAC, pointed out some corrections in the dates of the Project Design Meeting held in Vienna. The RCA-FP agreed to make the correction after confirmation.

The Meeting took note of the Report on the Follow-Up Actions of the 43rd GCM, and requested the RCA-FP to make the necessary correction after confirmation.

4. RCA Annual Report for 2014 (RCANRM(37)/3)

The RCA Chair invited the RCA-FP to provide a brief summary of the draft RCA Annual Report 2014 which had been circulated to NRs. The RCA-FP requested the NRs to make their comments on the presented first draft. The PAC Chair pointed out some discrepancy in the number of projects, which was corrected. Also, he made some observations regarding the format of the report, which reflects the IAEA's contribution to the RCA Programme rather than focussing on project outcomes. The RCA-FP agreed to some extent but emphasised that the report should be comprised of the data as provided by NRs. JPN was of the view that the report should be as per the mandate of the RCA Agreement. The RCA-FP insisted that the current guidelines should be followed and if required, a new format of the report could be agreed upon. PHI suggested that a paragraph on the achievements of the projects completed in 2014 could be included in the executive summary of the Annual Report.

The Meeting took note of the draft RCA Annual Report 2014 and adopted it with some modifications which should be done in track mode. The changes in track mode should be sent to the RCA Chair by 15 April 2015. The Meeting was also of the view that a strategy should be devised to improve the structure of the report. Suggestions in this regard may be sent to RCA-FP for discussion at the next NRs' policy meeting for their inclusion in the guidelines.

5. Implementation of the RCA Programme

a. Review of the implementation of the RCA Programme in 2014 (RCANRM(37)/4)

At the invitation of the RCA Chair, the RCA-FP provided a review on the implementation of the RCA Programme in 2014. He highlighted the salient achievements of RAS/7021 and informed that the results provided by JPN, ROK, IND, PAK and MAL are impressive. Also, he noted the distance learning training modules that were developed in the framework of RAS6064, RAS6066 and RAS1012 and advised that these training modules are now available on the internet. To continue, he presented the implementation rate of the RCA projects and extrabudgetary requirements during 2014. He informed that extrabudgetary contributions have been received from CPR, INS, ROK, NZE and USA.

The results of the project RAS7021 were further discussed after the RCA-FP presentation. RCARO suggested that it should be clearly mentioned in the report that the coastal areas of the RCA GPs are clean from artificial radioactivity. The RCA-FP replied that no increase in radioactivity level has been reported so far. The FNCA Coordinator of Japan highlighted that although increased radionuclide concentrations have been monitored in the sea, these have occurred only in a small area within the port of the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station. To avoid any misunderstandings, he suggested considering building further human capacity in the study of the possible impacts of the Fukushima accident. JPN ensured that it is their responsibility to provide accurate and timely information on the situation surrounding Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant including the radioactivity level. PHI stated that the people working in this field are beginners and they have not all the background knowledge in the subject area of work. PAC Chair was also pleased with progress of the project.

The Meeting took note of the implementation of RCA Programme in 2014. A session was held to discuss the projects' results, which were found to be satisfactory.

b. Planned arrangements of regional events in 2015 (RCANRM(37)/5)

The RCA Chair requested the RCA-FP to present the arrangements for management of the RCA projects as well as a tentative implementation plan of the RCA events in 2015. The RCA-FP provided the forward work programme of projects and scheduled regional events. He requested NRs to confirm their agreement to host those events for which they were listed.

The Meeting discussed the planned arrangements of regional events in 2015. The Meeting requested NRs to review the work plan and send hosting confirmation of the proposed events to RCA-FP by 15 April 2015.

6. Review of the Progress of the RCA Projects in 2014 (RCANRM(37)/6)

Progress on the implementation of each RCA project was presented (Annex-2) by the Lead Country responsible. The specific projects presented and discussed were:

Project Number	LC
RAS6063	PHI
RAS7024	PHI
RAS1012	PAK
RAS7022	PAK
RAS6061	IND
RAS1013	IND
RAS6077	AUL
RAS6064	AUL
RAS5055	AUL
RAS7021	AUL
RAS1014	MAL
RAS7023	NZE
RAS6065	ROK
RAS6076	ROK
RAS6053	JPN
RAS6062	JPN

Salient elements of each presentation were comprised of the project activities, outcomes, issues and recommendations. After each presentation, there was a discussion on the project outcomes and implementation issues, wherever suitable.

During the presentation of Project RAS1012, the LC (PAK) mentioned that most of the GPs have established high capabilities in conventional radiotracers and sealed source-based technology through their participation in RCA activities since 2010. Innovative nuclear technologies such as Gamma CT/SPECT, RPT, RTD-CFD and Monte Carlo simulation were the focus of RAS1012; the main purpose of which is to assist in solving complex industrial systems. It was mentioned that some GPs have developed strong capabilities in one or more of these useful tools, nevertheless, more time and coordinated efforts are needed to extend these capabilities to industrial product lines and processes. Furthermore, it is necessary to keep supporting the new RCA members and those GPs which are catching up with the technology. Considering these facts, the LC (PAK) requested an extension of this project; however the Meeting was reminded that, at the 43rd GCM, GPs had, after an agreed ranking exercise,

committed to the extension or commencement of five projects for TC Cycle 2016-2017, and that the budgetary requirements for these projects already exceeded the available budget. Accordingly, it was confirmed that RAS1012 would not be extended in TC Cycle 2016-2017.

During the discussion of project RAS1013, the LC (IND) provided a recommendation regarding the alignment of projects' development with GPs' needs. The RCA Chair supported the idea and further elaborated that there are three kinds of GP in the RCA Region: developed, developing, and those new to the usage of nuclear technology. He recommended that NRs review their needs thoroughly in order to design projects accordingly.

During the discussion on project RAS6077, the LC (AUL) highlighted the development of the e-learning programme throughout the project. He recommended that GPs promote survey results in their respective domains and emphasised that the project needs to have longevity to fully realise its objectives and to provide maximum benefit to the participating GPs and the region.

During the discussion on project RAS6064, the RCA Chair stated that it was encouraging that nuclear medicine training was being provided on-line as it allows GPs to increase their interaction with other countries through active participation.

During the discussion on RAS5055, the RCARO appreciated the project and observed that GPs should be advised on how to mitigate soil erosion problems. The LCC (AUL) informed the Meeting that the database compiled through the project activities will be used to design informed mitigation policies.

During the presentation of RAS7021, the LC (AUL) shared that the project results show that apart from localised contamination in the immediate vicinity of the Fukushima power plant, any contamination detected elsewhere is well below established safety limits. He recommended that all participating GPs submit all monitoring data to ASPAMARD by the end of the 2nd quarter of 2015. JPN expressed its deep appreciation to AUL and IAEA, and highlighted that the project is contributing to regional capacity building and networks.

PHI inquired whether there was any dispersion modelling involved in the project. LC (AUL) advised that dispersion modelling was planned but expertise in this area is very specific and therefore it was difficult to have it as part of the project at this stage. If necessary, dispersion modelling could be included as part of the new project to be commenced in the next biennium. MAL raised a query regarding budgetary issues of the project. The LC (AUL) informed that it has been implemented with extrabudgetary funds and that additional sources of funding will be explored for the next project cycle. RCA PAC seconded this information and stated that some budget alternatives were to be discussed for this project.

During the discussion on the project RAS1014, the LC (MAL) highlighted the achievements regarding products development and emphasised its continuation. RCARO raised a query regarding the kind of products developed in the framework of project. The LC (MAL) provided the products' details.

During the presentation of the project RAS6065, the LC (MAL) highlighted the benefits and cost effectiveness of SBRT over conventional techniques.

At the end of the presentations, the RCA Chair noted the good progress made on the RCA projects and encouraged LCCs and NPCs to continue their efforts to maintain a successful implementation. The specific conclusions made by the RCA Chair with reference to each of the above mentioned projects are the following:

- RAS6063 (PHI): The Meeting agreed that NRs have benefited from the project.
- RAS7024 (PHI): The Meeting noted the usefulness of the project.
- RAS1012 (PAK): The Meeting agreed that beneficial and innovative nuclear techniques have been introduced through the project for the benefit of industry and there exists a great potential to further strengthen this technology. The NRs showed support for the benefits produced by RAS1012, however agreed that there was no scope to extend the project in TC Cycle 2016-2017 due to budgetary constraints.
- RAS7022 (PAK): The Meeting noted the usefulness of the project.
- RAS6066 (IND): The Meeting noted the usefulness of the project.
- RAS1013 (IND): The Meeting noted the usefulness of the project. It also provided some recommendations to NRs, including that the GPs should carry out a needs analysis in order to design projects accordingly.
- RAS6077 (AUL): The Meeting acknowledged that the training in the field of medical physics carried out in the framework of this project is very good and should be continued. The meeting also recommended the participation of VIE in the project activities.
- RAS6064 (AUL): The Meeting noted that the project was very valuable and encouraged NRs to actively participate in the on-line program established through the project in order to maximize the benefits of this unique educational learning system.
- RAS5055 (AUL): The Meeting emphasized that food security is a high priority for the region and noted that the project has contributed to addressing it. NRs were asked to actively take part and AUL was congratulated for its efforts.
- RAS7021 (AUL): NRs took keen interest in the project activities which were appreciated by the LC. Funding issues on the project were addressed in the RCA PAC presentation.
- RAS1014 (MAL): The Meeting found that the project was interesting and recommended its continuation. The NRs showed support for the benefits produced by RAS1014, however due to budgetary constraints, it was agreed that there was no scope to extend the project in TC Cycle 2016-2017.
- RAS7023 (NZE): The Meeting found that the project was useful and suggested that useful analytical techniques should be strengthened in GPs.
- RAS6065 (ROK): The Meeting appreciated the usefulness of the project and recommended its activities be continued.
- RAS6076 (ROK): The Meeting found the project very worthy and appreciated the project activities.
- RAS6053 (JPN): The Meeting noted that the project focused on the transfer of image based radiotherapy from 2D to 3D. The project will be continued through RAS6072.
- RAS6062 (JPN): The Meeting appreciated the usefulness of 3D imaging techniques and mentioned that it would be suitable to have similar projects in the future.

The Meeting noted all the project presentations and discussed all salient issues.

7. Report of the RCA PAC on the situation and quality of RCA project documents submitted to IAEA under the 2016-2017 TC Cycle - (RCANRM(37)/7)

a. Report of the RCA PAC on the situation and quality of RCA project documents submitted to the IAEA under the 2016 – 2017 TC Cycle.

The RCA PAC Chair presented the report contained in RCANRM(37)/7. RCA-FP pointed out that there was a need to define ‘in-kind’ contribution as there was uncertainty as to whether it also included national level activities. NZE reminded the meeting that it did, in accordance with the reported conclusion and recommendations as contained in the draft report of the 43rd RCA GCM (v2).

RCA PAC Chair reminded the meeting that the draft template is an interim design template due to the limited time given to the PAC to prepare it. Furthermore, it was designed based on the assumption that each RCA project was expected to carry out at least one spin-off national activity. The draft template is to be considered further at the 44th GCM later this year.

JPN requested clarification of the template in order to compile ‘in-kind’ contributions and asked whether the request also includes donors’ ‘in-kind’ contributions.

RCA PAC Chair reminded the meeting that it was agreed to have a template as a means of ensuring a level playing field for all RCA GPs in terms of ‘in-kind’ contribution. This decision is based on UNDP practice of reporting contributions to its programmes.

The Meeting agreed on the proposed interim in-kind contribution template. RCA-PAC was requested to develop a definition of in-kind contributions, to analyse the responses to the most recent request for information on in-kind contributions and to report to the 44th RCA GCM. NRs who have not submitted their responses may do so by 15 April 2015.

Mr. Sueo Machi inquired whether experts were invited into RCA PAC, to which the RCA PAC Chair confirmed they were.

RCA PAC Chair pointed out the mismatch between the 2016-2019 budget for the proposed projects and the available budget. AUL reminded the Meeting that the acceptance of the proposed projects is based on the decision taken at the 43rd GCM, where the budget was allocated on the basis of prioritization.

MAL asked if the GCM could re-examine project proposals which were submitted through the PCMF platform since 28th March 2015. RCA PAC Chair replied that it was not possible at this stage since any project proposal needs to be reviewed by RCA PAC first.

PAK enquired if the 28th March deadline can be extended, to which RCA-FP reminded the Meeting that the deadline is set in the PCMF system and therefore cannot be

extended. AUL recalled that during the 43rd GCM, five projects had gone through the acceptance process and therefore, to abandon the established process will discredit the RCA procedures.

It was agreed that, in accordance with the recommendations of the RCA PAC, the projects commencing in 2016-2017, and the budgets therefore, would be as follows:

Project	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
2014011 SBRT (ROK)	€ 119,000	€ 122,500	€ 166,500	€ 182,000	€ 0
2014008 Water (PAK)	€ 262,000	€ 118,000	€ 185,000	€ 45,000	€ 0
2014006 Air (NZE)	€ 207,000	€ 43,000	€ 127,000	€ 0	€ 0
2014001 Fukushima (AUL)		€ 285,000	€ 382,000	€ 126,000	€ 192,000
2014004 Mutation (CPR)		€ 127,000	€ 220,000	€ 66,000	€ 149,000

The Meeting agreed to the proposed formulation and scheduling of the five new projects for the 2016-17 Cycle as given in the RCA PAC Report. LCCs of all seven proposed RCA projects were requested to finalize project documents and submit to the RCA Chair through their respective NRs by 25 March 2015 for further uploading by the RCA Chair to the PCMF platform by 28 March 2015.

b. Report of the RCA PAC on the advantage and disadvantages of a four year project cycle (RCANRM (37)/8) and Annex-2

The Meeting took note of the report and observed that the project duration depends on the nature and the scope of the project and therefore the time lines of the projects should be flexible.

8. Report of the Working Group on the preparation of the RCA Medium Term Strategy and Strategic Priorities 2018-2023 (RCANRM(37)/9) and Annex-3

a. Report of the results of the RCA MTS Survey

As reported by the Working Group Chair, 12 out of 22 GPs responded to the survey, namely: Australia, Bangladesh, China, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Myanmar, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam. The respondents prioritized the current thematic areas and indicated possible new areas of regional cooperation such as: combined thematic approach; responding to climate change; education and training in molecular imaging and diagnosis; upscaling of radiation processed grafted materials; tropical disease (dengue); nuclear instrumentation; risk

communication; conjunctive management of land and freshwater; and value-added products from bio-industries.

All responding GPs, except Vietnam, considered cooperative research to be an important component of the RCA Programme.

On the need for a long-term RCA Chair, three GPs voted *Yes*, seven GPs voted *No*, one GP made no decision, and one GP has no preference at present.

b. Report of the Expert Group Meeting on the RCA Medium Term Strategy and Strategic Priorities 2018–2023

The Working Group Chair, the NR of the PHI, presented the report of the Expert Group Meeting which was held on 16-20 February 2015 in Vienna, Austria. The Meeting was attended by four external experts, three experts from the IAEA Secretariat, the past RCA Chair, the Director of the RCARO, five members of the Working Group including the Chair, and the RCA-FP. During the Meeting, eleven discussion papers were presented. The report cited conclusions and recommendations on RCA governance, strategic directions and priorities that will guide the WG in the formulation of the RCA MTS and Strategic priorities for 2018-2023. The report presented the schedule that will be followed by the WG in order to complete the document on the RCA Medium Term Strategy and Strategic Priorities 2018–2023.

c. Discussion of the Report of the Expert Group Meeting

Several NRs gave their comments on the proposed scheme for RCA governance. CPR, IND and AUL indicated their preference for Alternative 2a. AUL added that the RCARO cannot be involved in RCA governance unless an amendment is made to the RCA Agreement. AUL further suggested appointing a group to study the two alternatives. IND suggested deleting the SAC under Alternative 2a. NZE explained that the present duties of the RCA Chair do not include the implementation of the present RCA MTS, and the proposed RCA governance structure was made in view of filling this gap. JPN suggested that the present system be retained. Any change in the RCA management should be performed in a holistic and integrated manner.

The FNCA Coordinator of Japan asked how the RCA MTS, when aligned to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), will respond to poverty alleviation. The WG Chair responded that a majority of the RCA GPs still depended heavily on agriculture both for food security and livelihood. The RCA has shown that nuclear S&T can contribute to agricultural productivity and food security. AUL suggested that there should be a balance between the areas covered by the SDGs and those special areas covered by nuclear science and technology to ensure funding support from both sectors.

The Meeting noted the report provided by the Chair of the Working Group. The Meeting agreed that the Working Group should meet again in June 2015 and submit the final draft of RCA Medium Term Strategy and Strategic Priorities for 2018-2023 to the 44th RCA GCM.

9. Report of the Working Group on the Proposed Amendments to the RCA Agreement – RCANRM(37)/10

The chair of the Working Group reported on the outcomes of the negotiations to date on the possible amendment of the agreement. Final agreement had not yet been achieved. PHI suggested that GPs should consult their respective governments and submit the result of such consultation to the WG chair by the end of June 2015.

The Meeting took note of the revised report of the WG. The Meeting endorsed another WG Meeting in July 2015 to resolve the outstanding issues. The Meeting recommended that NRs should seek the views of their respective GPs and provide feedback to the Chair of the WG in this matter by 30 June 2015.

10. Report of the Director RCARO (RCANRM(37)/11) and Annex-3

The Meeting noted the report presented by DIR-RCARO. The Meeting watched the promotional video prepared by RCARO based on the success stories of the RCA projects and endorsed its use. The Meeting endorsed RCARO's work plan to improve RCA Website Information Service including a shorter version of RCA Annual Report to be uploaded on the RCA Website for public access through formulation of guidelines by the RCARO SAC.

11. Report of the Chairman of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee – (RCANRM(37)/12)

The Meeting noted and approved the report of the RCARO SAC presented by the RCA Chair.

12. Report of the WG on the future of RCARO (RCANRM(37)/13) and Annex-3

The Meeting noted the report of the WG. The Meeting found several legal issues in the subject matter and noted the advice from the Office of Legal Affairs of IAEA regarding the IAEA's role in RCA. The Meeting observed no consensus on the future role of the RCARO. The Meeting agreed that another WG meeting should be convened for further discussion of this issue prior to any further discussion by a meeting of NRs.

13. Report on the Collaborative Activities between RCA and FNCA in 2014 by the National Representatives of the Project Lead Countries (RCANRM(37)/14) and Annex-3

The Meeting took note of the report presented by the National Representative of ROK.

14. Presentation on FNCA activities by Mr. Sueo Machi, FNCA Coordinator of Japan (RCANRM(37)/15)

The Meeting took note and appreciated the presentation of Mr. Sueo Machi, FNCA Coordinator from JPN, and suggested that LCCs of the identified three collaborative projects could include in their work plans, provision to fund participation of non-members of FNCA in its activities.

15. Update on Status of Acceptance of the Fifth Agreement to Extend the 1987 Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology (RCA) (RCANRM(37)/16)

The Meeting noted the report of the current status of acceptance of the Fifth Agreement to Extend the 1987 Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology and recommended that the GPs who have not yet accepted the extension agreement do so as early as possible.

16. Arrangements for the 44th RCA GCM, the 38th and the 39th RCA NRMs

The Meeting requested the RCA-FP to make preparations for the 44th RCA GCM to be held in Vienna on 11 September 2015. The Meeting further noted that the 38th NRM was scheduled to be held in MON; however, the official confirmation to this effect will be conveyed by the RCA Chair to the NRs on receipt of the same. The 39th RCA NRM would be held in BGD after official confirmation.

17. Adoption of the Meeting Report of the 37th National Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives

The Meeting reviewed, revised and agreed the recorded conclusions, findings and decisions made during the Meeting. The RCA Chair was requested to circulate the draft report without annexes to the delegates within one month after the Meeting. The NRs were asked to submit their comments within two weeks of receipt of the draft report. The RCA Chair will circulate the final report within two weeks after receipt of comments.

The Meeting adopted the report of the 37th NRM, Islamabad, Pakistan.

18. Closing

RCA Chair thanked the rapporteurs for their work, all NRs, IAEA officials, RCARO, Mr. Sueo Machi and Mr. John Easey. He also thanked the NRs of IND, NZE and AUL who participated in the Meeting through video conferencing. He thanked Mr. Steven McIntosh (AUL) as well as ANSTO for providing the bridge for the video conferencing. Ms. Alumanda Dela Rosa (PHI) thanked the government of Pakistan for making excellent arrangements for the 37th NRM. On behalf of IAEA, Director TCAP, Ms. Najat Mokhtar thanked PAEC and reiterated the IAEA's commitment to the RCA Programme. She praised the RCA Chair, Syed Shaukat Hasan, for conducting the Meeting. Also, she appreciated Mr. Sinh Van Hoang for his efforts to make the Meeting a success. The Meeting ended in the evening of March 18, 2015.