

**RCA Rep(25)/2
(Agenda 3)**



DRAFT (Final)

**MEETING REPORT OF
THE 31st RCA GENERAL CONFERENCE**

**Meeting Room V, CO7,
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
ARCAL	Regional Cooperative Agreement for the Advancement of Nuclear Science and Technology in Latin America and the Caribbean
DDG	Deputy Director General
DIR	Director
ESCAP	United Nations Economic and Social Commission For Asia and the Pacific
FNCA	Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
LC	Lead Country
LDR/HDR	Low Dose Rate/High Dose Rate
MS	Member State
NA	Department of Nuclear Sciences and Applications

RCA	Regional Cooperative Agreement for Research, Development and Training Related to Nuclear Science and Technology
RCARO	RCA Regional Office
RRU	Regional Resource Unit
TC	Technical Cooperation
TCAPS	East Asia and the Pacific Section
TCPA	Division for Africa, and East Asia and the Pacific
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

INTRODUCTION

The 31st RCA GC was attended by (39) delegates from RCA Member States: AUL, BGD, CPR, IND, INS, JPN, ROK, MAL, MON, MYA, NZE, PAK, PHI, SIN, SRL,THA and VIE.

The IAEA was represented by DDG-TC (Mr. QIAN Jihui), Mr. H. Livingston (on behalf of DDG-NA), DIR-TCPA (Mr. B-K Kim), SH-TCAPS (Mr. M. N. Razley) and RCA Co-ordinator (Mr. C.R. Aleta). Several Agency Technical Officers, Project/Country Officers and support staff were also present. The list of the participants and other attendees is attached in Annex 1.

I. OPENING

I.1 Remarks by outgoing chairpersons:

Mr. N. Choudhury (BDG), the outgoing Chairperson and National RCA Co-ordinator) gave his welcoming remarks by thanking the MSs for their cooperation during his tenure. Before handing over the chairmanship of the meeting to Mr. In-soon Chang (ROK), he traced the brief history of rotating the chairmanship of the RCA GC. He informed that he was elected in March 2001 during the Dhaka meeting and in March 2002 the chairmanship was handed over to Republic of Korea at the meeting in Seoul, Republic of Korea. He stated that the establishment of the RCA Regional Office has been realised at last and concluded by thanking the Member States for their support in the RCA programs. The meeting proceeded with the remarks from DDG-TC, Mr. QIAN Jihui and DDG-NA.

I.2 Message from IAEA:

The DDG-TC, Mr. QIAN Jihui, welcomed the participants and he spoke about the direction of RCA and its success in establishing the RCA Regional Office in ROK. He stressed the need to bear in mind the central criteria while performing upstream programming work, the ability to grab opportunities for demonstrating to relevant/concerned authorities, the attractiveness of nuclear techniques in solving national problems (such as communicable diseases, food and mouth disease (FMD), coastal zone management) and other issues. He expressed his satisfaction with RCA's initiative to collaborate with Asian Development Bank on air pollution project and future project with JICA on FMD projects. He advised RCA to solicit ways to obtain other donors for its projects. In closing, he expressed his gratitude to MSs for their support, trust and friendship accorded to him during his tenure as DDG-TC over the past decade and indicated his intention to serve RCA programmes in another capacity in the future.

The message of DDG-NA, Mr. Burkart (who was unable to participate at the meeting), was delivered by Mr. H. Livingston. He briefed the meeting on the Johannesburg Summit on Sustainable Development. (Refer Annex 2 for the text of his remarks)

I.3 Remarks by incoming chairperson:

Mr. In-soon Chang (ROK) explained to the meeting that the elected Chairperson of the RCA (Mr. Chung Won Cho), was unable to participate in the meeting and as such he was requested to function as the Chairperson instead. He thanked the outgoing Chairperson, Mr. N. Choudhury (BDG), for his outstanding leadership and excellent performance in handling the affairs of the RCA during his tenure and stated that RCA has performed remarkably well over the past 30 years. He also conveyed his thanks and gratitude to the RCA Secretariat for its effort in preparing the 31st RCA GC. He urged MSs to rededicate their commitment to the founding principles of RCA as well as to formulate new visions to jointly meet the challenges of the 21st century. He then proceeded with the designation of rapporteur(s). He informed that Mr. K.P. Kim (cost free expert from ROK) and Ms. M. Tan (RCA office) have been designated as rapporteurs for the meeting under the supervision of Mr. Aleta, RCA coordinator.

I.4 Adoption of Agenda:

Thailand proposed for an additional item, project proposal, be added to item X (other matters) of the Agenda.

The meeting adopted the Agenda of the meeting as shown in Annex 3 with the above proposed amendment.

II MATTERS ARISING FROM THE 24TH RCA MEETING REPORT

Mr. Aleta, RCA Coordinator informed the meeting that prior to this meeting a table showing the status of follow-up actions from the 24th meeting of National RCA representatives in March 2002 had been circulated to MSs for their information and feedback. He pointed out that several items listed in the table (Annex 4) constitute part of the agenda of this meeting and others will be taken up during the afternoon informal session. It was noted that the proposal on the disposal of non-power radioactive waste, submitted by the Philippines for consideration as 2003-2004 project will be further explored for the next cycle.

Australia proposed that project evaluation using electronic means and follow-up with other regional organisations be taken up at the 25th Meeting of National RCA Representatives scheduled to be held in Pakistan next March.

Mr. Aleta pointed out that RCA projects had never been evaluated by an outside independent body and it would be good to subject RCA programme to such an evaluation to ascertain that its objectives are achieved and the needs of RCA MSs. are met.

The meeting agreed to deliberate some of the issues stated in the follow-up actions from the 24th meeting of National RCA representatives during the afternoon informal session and the remaining issues will be taken up at the next meeting of National RCA representatives in Pakistan next March.

III. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT OF THE 24TH RCA MEETING OF NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Aleta informed the meeting that the report has been circulated to MSs for their comments and feedback. To date, the Secretariat has not received any feedback from MSs. In view of the foregoing, the meeting adopted the above report.

The report was adopted as prepared.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE RCA ANNUAL REPORT 2001

Mr. Aleta briefed the meeting on the composition of the RCA Annual Report 2001. It comprises of three parts, namely Part I is intended to be a stand-alone document describing the highlights of the RCA programme in 2001. It is also intended to be an anniversary issue to commemorate its 30 years of regional cooperation amongst the 17 countries of RCA and features success stories achieved by MSs in the last 5 years with focus on the previous year; Part II describes the activities and achievements under each active projects and Part III is the submission from MSs on their participation in the various project activities. It was noted that MSs have been requested to provide their comments and inputs to all 3 parts of the report and the revised version of the report was placed in the RCA homepage. It was also noted that the secretariat has only received success stories for the 2001 RCA Annual Report from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Philippines, Singapore and Sri Lanka. The meeting having deliberated on the content of the success stories, concurred that respective Lead Country should provide achievement or success story based on its respective sectors. India and Malaysia congratulated the RCA Regional Office in the Republic of Korea for doing an excellent job in printing Part I of the Annual Report.

MSs acknowledged the good work done by RCA Regional Office and thanked the office for printing and editing Part I of the RCA Annual Report. The meeting adopted the 2001 RCA Annual Report.

V. PROGRAMME FOR 2003/2004

V.1 Agency Guidelines presented by Mr. B-K Kim, DIR-TCPA

Mr. B-K Kim spoke about enhancing the programming for 2005/06 and the sustainability of the RCA. He informed the meeting that the 2003-2004 TC Programme is being finalised and it is time to embark on the 2005-2006 upstream work so as to assure higher quality programming for the new biennium as well to meet the requirements of the TC funding strategy that centers on central criteria (one of the key criteria is - projects that demonstrate strong government commitment). The challenges facing MSs for the next cycle is to formulate quality RCA projects with potential for socio-economic impact. There is also the challenge of demonstrating how its regional aspects can “add val

be done within national or Agency programmes. He spoke about the need for nuclear institutions to be more self-reliant and sustainable and he proposed RCA to prepare a paper, outlining strategies to be adopted by the RCA Regional Office for marketing the capabilities of the RCA to major regional development and funding organisations and increasing revenues to MSs, for tabling at the next meeting of RCA National Representatives in Pakistan next March. He urged RCA MSs not to be complacent of their past achievements but to seek for revival of their past enthusiasm. (Refer Annex 5 for DIR-TCPA's presentation).

In conclusion he informed the meeting of the forthcoming changes in TC management staff, including the office of the RCA coordinator.

V.2 East Asia and the Pacific Programme presented by Mr. M.N. Razley, SH-TCAPS

Mr. Razley talked about the importance of designing projects that meet the central criteria so as to ensure sustainability of the project as well as to ensure TC funding and other donors. He cited two examples where one is a non-RCA project and the other is a potential RCA project. These two examples showed how linkages are established between MSs, IAEA and donors in jointly achieving the objectives of the projects (i.e., reducing micronutrients malnutrition in the non RCA project and curbing Livestock Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) for the RCA project). It was noted that JICA has shown interest in supporting the FMD project that is linked to a national project and where IAEA, FAO and ASEAN have each a significant role to play. He thanked MSs for their pledges and payment to TCF. He informed them of East Asia and Pacific's region share in the 2003-2004 TC programme which is being finalised and the proposed budget for the coming biennium is about US\$26 million which account for 19% of the total TC fund for that cycle. He emphasized that the TC department will continue to reduce the number of projects over the years with the focus of having fewer but better projects (i.e., projects that meet central criterion); [Refer Annex 6]

V.3 RCA Programme-presented by Mr. C. Aleta, RCA Coordinator

Mr. Aleta presented an overview of the RCA programme for 2003/2004 biennium, including the budget for each sectoral area projects. He informed the meeting that the Agency appraised the project proposals based on the TC Guidelines for finalizing the projects for the 2003/2004, with emphasis on the central criterion as the basis for approving projects for TC funding. A Lead Country Meeting held on 29 July- 2 August 2002 reviewed /amended the proposals and project prioritisation, applied further budgetary adjustments within the ceiling allocated to RCA programme. Following the instruction from the TC management, the hardcore funding from TC funds for the radiation protection related project was removed and redistributed to other RCA projects because there are other Non-RCA radiation protection projects in-house.

There was much contention from MSs on this issue and the meeting concurred to reinstate the amount allocated to the hardcore funding of the radiation protection related project with a corresponding reduction in the other RCA projects.

The meeting concurred to restore the hardcore funding of the radiation protection related project with a corresponding reduction in the other RCA projects for the 2003/2004 biennium.

Japan expressed its intention of collaborating with the Government of Thailand through JICA, Japan, to create new partnership in the use of radiation in the fields of agriculture to treat Foot and Mouth Disease. Thailand thanked Japan for this initiative and promised to collaborate with JICA on this promising project.

Australia confirmed her commitment to support RCA program in the project “Improving regional capabilities for assessment, planning and response to environmental and radiological emergencies.” by providing extra budgetary fund totalling A\$ 1.3 million over the next 3 years (Jan. 2003 to Dec. 2005). [Refer Annex 7] The Meeting supported this proposal from Australia.

VI. MANAGEMENT ISSUES

VI.1 Lead Country

The meeting recalled that at the meeting in Seoul, it was agreed that Indonesia continue to serve as Lead Country for the health sector with the assistance from Australia for implementation of 2002 and finalization of 2003/2004 RCA Programme. Japan will commence to be the Lead Country for the health sector during the formulation of the 2005-2006 programme. It was also agreed at that meeting that industry and environment sector be split into two separate thematic sectors with separate Lead Countries. All the above had been taken into account while drawing out the new list of Lead Country.

MSs were requested to review the list and identify projects that they would like to be Lead Country for the 2003/2004 biennium and inform the Secretariat accordingly.

India pointed out that ideally the above task of identifying Lead Country should be undertaken by Project Coordinators because they are supposed to meet annually to discuss management issues and due to financial constraints such meetings have ceased. Nevertheless, project coordinators should discuss amongst themselves via electronic mails.

Japan informed the meeting that Japan had also been involved in the formulation of the health project for the 2003-2004 biennium. Japan requested MSs to heed the action plan on the Management of Lead Country which was prepared by Japan and endorsed by MSs at the meeting in Korea.

VI.2 Regional Resource Units (RRUs)

The RCA Coordinator requested National RCA Representatives with designated RRUs in their country to peruse the list of RRUs and questionnaire attached in the handouts of the meeting and to resubmit the questionnaire with updated information. For Member States who would like to volunteer RRUs in an on going or new projects they are to submit the completed questionnaire to the Secretariat.

VI.3 Extension of the RCA Agreement

It was noted that 13 countries (Bangladesh, China, India, Indonesia, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Vietnam) have already signified their acceptance to extend the 1987 Regional Cooperative Agreement for another five years, i.e, until 11 June 2007.

MSs that have yet to notify the Agency of their acceptance are requested to pursue this matter with their competent authorities.

VI.4 Outsourcing of Activities

Mr. Aleta informed the meeting that since the year 2000, RCA MSs have been encouraged to outsource the implementation of project activities. At the 24th Meeting of the National Representatives held in Korea in March 2002, MSs were again reminded of the need to outsource some of RCA Regional events. The Agency is still in the process of drawing up a policy on outsourcing, but there is already existing procedure that can enable activities to be outsourced. Several examples of outsourcing done in the past were subcontracted to an institute: the analysis of water samples and the development of distance training materials. In the case of outsourcing of regional training events, this has yet to be carried out and he hoped that two RCA events could be outsourced by the end of this year using the existing mechanism on outsourcing. He pointed out that two MSs have expressed their interest in implementing RCA events on an outsourcing basis.

Japan stated its intention to outsource training event and would like more details such as on the nature of the contract, the real merit to Japan and the TCDC component.

The Agency also encouraged RCA Regional Office to undertake outsourcing of RCA regional events to the extent possible in the nearest future.

To help the Agency and the interested MSs prepare for implementation through outsourcing of a regional event, MSs were requested to submit to the Agency the duly completed questionnaire, indicating the events that they would like to implement using the mechanism of outsourcing.

VII PROGRESS IN THE RCA REGIONAL OFFICE:

Mr. Jin-Kyoung Kim, Director of RCA Regional Office (RCARO), Korea gave a brief summary of RCARO achievements of the office since its inauguration in March 2001. Since then the RCARO had prepared a working paper on the establishment of an RCA Regional Office in the Republic of Korea for endorsement by MSs at this meeting, published the 30th anniversary Scientific Forum Report and the RCA Annual Report (Part 1), initiated 2 new projects to assist national programmes of MSs, obtained an increase in the operational budget for the RCA RO and establish the homepage with site name of RCARO.org. He requested MSs to endorse the adoption of the Working Paper that was basically in principle agreed at the 30th RCA General Conference in Vienna in September 2001. The meeting shall also endorse the adoption of several Guidelines that were reviewed and adopted by the Advisory Committee. An endorsed working paper will meet the need of the Regional Office to have a basis for preparing necessary supporting or back-up legal measures that will enable the Regional Office to enter into designated function, including requesting for operational funds from the government of the Republic of Korea.

The meeting proceeded with the presentation by Mr. J. Chung (ROK), on the status and issues of the RCA Regional Office. (Refer Annex 8)

Thailand expressed its reservation of RCA having an independent RCA Regional Office without linkage with IAEA and the comments from Thailand is in Annex 9.

JPN appreciated KOR government to support the regional office and expressed the view that there may be no need for legal document but perhaps a resolution within RCA Representatives, or statement of unanimous support and endorsement by MSs to the Office may suffice. The RCA RO will consult with the relevant Korean government ministries to determine which form will be acceptable to continue its financial support to the regional office.

The meeting having deliberated on the proposed working paper, particularly the legal aspects, concurred to adopt it on the basis that any comments from MSs may still be considered after its adoption. The meeting proposed RCA RO to formulate a work plan to be tabled at the next RCA National Representatives Meeting in Pakistan scheduled to be held in March 2003. KOR national representative will consult with Korean government on the appropriate form that will be acceptable to provide legal provisions for the Office.

VIII REGIONAL COOPERATION

VIII.1 Tripartite Meeting

Mr. Aleta informed the meeting that RCA will present two success stories at the tripartite meeting, submitted by India and based on a project meeting report, on “The use of RIA to diagnose micro-albumin” and Japan on “LDR and HDR treatment for brachytherapy cancer”. RCA representation at the Tripartite Meeting scheduled to be held on 19 September 2002 will comprise of the 3 Chairpersons (Bangladesh, Republic of Korea and

Pakistan), TCDC contact point (i.e., Malaysia) and the country representing health sector (i.e., Australia).

VIII.2 Forum for Nuclear Cooperation in Asia (FNCA)

Mr. Aleta informed the meeting that during the visit of the Japanese FNCA Coordinator to the Agency in January and June 2002 there was an exchange of information with RCA as to possible areas for cooperation. Since FNCA had already developed a protocol for treating cervical cancer with radiation sources and this protocol has been circulated for adoption or use by RCA MS, this was thought to be a good activity to be undertaken by FNCA and RCA. This proposed cooperation between FNCA and RCA has also been mentioned at the project committee meeting held in Bangkok in July 2002.

It was noted that the 3rd FNCA Ministerial Meeting will be held in Seoul from 30 to 31 October 2002 and further cooperation between RCA and FNCA on a complimentary basis will be discussed.

Other fields of possible cooperation mentioned were in agriculture and research reactor utilization, particularly on production of Tc-99 m.

VIII.3 UN ESCAP

Mr. Aleta recapped that at the Consultative Meeting to Enhance Awareness among Regional and International Organizations held in Dhaka in March 2001, a paper by UN ESCAP identified air, water and marine pollution as possible areas for cooperation with RCA/IAEA. In May 2002, on behalf of the IAEA/RCA, the National RCA Representative of Thailand participated in the UN ESCAP meeting and he was able to exchange information on the Agency/RCA activities, particularly in the above mentioned areas with UN ESCAP. UN ESCAP was invited to the Lead Country Meeting held in Vienna in July/August 2002 but UN ESCAP could not send a representative but UN ESCAP had expressed its interest in writing to continue to explore possible collaboration with RCA activities in the above mentioned areas.

The meeting noted the progress made with regards to establishing contacts with other international organizations and for the agency to pursue these.

IX 25th RCA MEETING OF NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES, PAKISTAN, 2003

Pakistan confirmed the hosting of the 25th RCA Meeting of National Representative in Islamabad scheduled from 24 to 28 March 2003. The first three days are planned for meeting of national representatives, fourth day will be a tour of Pakistan's nuclear institution and on the last day a forum to highlight achievements of RCA programmes in the past 30 years and respective RCA MSs are expected to present a paper on RCA achievements in the past 30 years. Other international organizations such as UNDP in Islamabad will be invited to the Forum. Proceedings of the meeting and achievements of RCA over the past

30 years will be compiled into a report and this will serve as an excellent document in creating awareness of RCA profile and programs.

The Secretariat will continue to communicate with Pakistan for the preparation of the above meeting.

X OTHER MATTERS

X.1 30th RCA Anniversary Celebration

It was noted that the 30th Anniversary was celebrated in Korea last March in conjunction with the 24th RCA National Representatives Meeting. Mr. Chung informed the meeting that the present Chairperson, Mr. Cho and Mr. J-K Kim, the Director of the RCA Regional Office are jointly hosting a reception at the VIC restaurant (Mozart Room) in the evening and representatives from RCA, AFRA and ARCAL are invited to the reception to celebrate RCA 30th Anniversary.

X.2 RCA Vision

Mr. Djaloeis presented his working paper on "RCA in the 21st Century". (Annex 10). It was noted that the paper was tabled at the 24th Meeting of National RCA Representatives in Korea in March 2002 and was supposed to be presented at the said meeting in Seoul and again during the LC Meeting in July/August 2002, but the author was unable to attend. The paper was presented at this meeting to solicit comments and discuss on the future direction of RCA. The meeting deliberated on the recommendations put forth in the paper and acknowledged the good work done by the author. Some of the recommendations proposed were not agreeable to most MSs as the proposal put forth is seen as a business enterprise but some of the recommendations were found to have merit. .

The paper cited that RCA in the 21st century should have clearer role of function, clear mission, shared vision and programme with sharper focus and more active MSs participation and diversified funding sources. However, Mr. Djaloeis had requested MSs to provide their comments to the Secretariat by 18 November 2002 and by 31 December 2002 the working paper will be revised based on their comments for adoption at the next RCA meeting.

The meeting agreed to deliberate further on the paper and supported the fact that RCA need to formulate a strategic plan.

X.3 Advisory Bodies

The RCA Coordinator recalled the experience in RCA on the use of advisory bodies in the formulation of projects in some sectoral areas like agriculture, health and industry for previous programs cycles. It was noted at the LC Meeting in July/August 2002, the LC Coordinator for China expressed the need for an advisory body.

The meeting concurred that Advisory Bodies played an important role in formulating RCA projects but it is important to note that people in the Advisory

Body should have broader view and not necessarily be -technical people.

X.4 Project Proposal From Thailand

Mr. Manoon (THA), presented a conceptual proposal on “Radiation safety on upgrading of radiation protection infrastructures, occupational safety and radiation protection of patients”. (Annex 11)

He requested MSs to peruse the proposal and further discussions on the modality of implementation and funding structure of such a project could be taken up at the next RCA Meeting of National Representatives in Pakistan scheduled to be held in March 2003.

XI CLOSING

The Chairperson expressed his thanks to the Secretariat for organising this meeting and MSs for their participation and cooperation.

XII ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The meeting acknowledged the good work done by Mr. Aleta during his tenure as RCA Coordinator and expressed its gratitude and thanks for his services rendered to RCA MSs over the past five years.