

MEETING REPORT

28TH MEETING OF THE NATIONAL

RCA REPRESENTATIVES

27-30 March 2006

Bangkok, Thailand

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28TH MEETING OF RCA NATIONAL REPRESENTATIVES

**27-30 MARCH 2006
BANGKOK, THAILAND**

1. Opening

The 28th Meeting of National RCA Representatives was held at the Amari Boulevard Hotel, Bangkok, Thailand from 27th to 30th March 2006. 49 participants from 17 RCA Member States, International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the RCA Regional Office (RCARO) attended the Meeting. The list of participants is given in Annex 1. Mr. Manase Peter Salema, Director, Division for Asia and the Pacific, Department of Technical Cooperation; Mr. Prinath Dias, RCA Focal Person; and Mr. Hiroshi Rikihisa, Project Management Officer of the RCA Secretariat, represented the IAEA.

Dr. Somporn Chongkum, Deputy Secretary General of Office of Atoms for Peace (OAP), welcomed the delegates on behalf of the host country. Mr. Prinath Dias conveyed the apologies of Mr. Peter Salema for his inability to be present at the Opening Ceremony due to unforeseen circumstances and read a message on his behalf. The Message of Mr. Salema is given in Annex 2. His Excellency Dr. Pravich Rattanapian, Minister of Science and Technology (MOST), addressed the gathering and declared the Meeting open.

Following the opening session, there was a press conference chaired by the Minister of Science and Technology. He responded to the number of questions from the local media.

1.1 Welcome Remarks of the Current Chair

Dr. Nahrul Khair Alang Md Rashid, the current RCA Chair, thanked all National representatives for their presence and conveyed his appreciation to Thailand for hosting the Meeting and for all the arrangements made. He invited nominations for the Chair of the Meeting.

1.2 Election of the Chair/ Rapporteurs

Australia proposed Dr. Manoon Aramrattana, the National RCA Representative for Thailand as the Chair of the Meeting. Viet Nam seconded the proposal. Dr. Aramrattana was unanimously elected by the Member States.

1.3 Remarks of the new Chair

Dr. Manoon Aramrattana conveyed his gratitude to the Member States for electing him as the Chair of the 28th Meeting of the National RCA Representatives. He remarked that RCA has gone through a number of developments and changes, both in terms of activities and management. He mentioned that all National RCA Representatives had gathered together in order to deal with the changes RCA was experiencing at the moment. He hoped that the Meeting would be able to provide answers to most of the issues, or at least most of the difficult issues, by coming up with certain targets or guidelines. He said that he would try his best to guide the Meeting to a successful conclusion.

The Chair thanked the outgoing Chair, Dr. Nahrul, for his dynamic leadership and excellent performance in running the affairs of RCA during the past year. He also thanked all participants for their kind cooperation and the staff of the OAP for their contribution to the arrangements for the meeting. The Chair proposed Ms. Jindarom Chvawarenpun, National TC Liaison Officer, to be the chief rapporteur for the Meeting.

2. Adoption of the Agenda

Australia suggested an Agenda Item on the Agreement for Mutual Recognition of NDT Certification Schemes. Mr. Dias mentioned that this would be covered in his presentation on the implementation of the RCA Programme in 2005.

Following a proposal made by the Philippines and supported by New Zealand, Australia and India, the Meeting decided to add a new Agenda Item titled “Outcome of the Discussion with DDG-TC on Restructuring of TC Department” and decided this Item should be taken-up after the presentation of Mr. Salema on “RCA-IAEA Partnership”.

The Meeting adopted the Agenda with the above amendment.

The Agenda was further revised during the course of the Meeting. The adopted Agenda incorporating the revisions made is given in Annex 3.

3. Report of the 34th RCA GCM - Matters Arising and Follow-up Actions

The Chair drew the attention of the Meeting to the Background Paper RCANRM(28)/2 containing the status of the implementation of the decisions made at the 34th RCA GCM (Annex 4) and requested Mr. Dias to summarize the contents of this document. Australia observed that further revisions should be made to the latest version of the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules. Specifically the footnote on p3 from item (f) still referred to the RCARO as being in interim operation and ENO should be deleted from the list of Thematic Sectors. Australia also requested that Meeting documents uploaded to Livelink should have tracked changes when they were revised. This would allow the revisions to be seen more readily and would not require the whole document to be reread. It would also be helpful if the document number also reflected the revision.

Mr. Dias undertook to make the necessary amendments to the Guidelines and Operating Rules and to post the revised version on the Members Only Home Page and Livelink.

The Meeting noted that the decisions of the 34th GCM had been satisfactorily implemented and that the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules would be amended as agreed.

4. RCA Annual Report for 2005

At the invitation of the Chair, Mr. Dias summarized Background Paper RCANRM(28) /3 and said that the Annual Report for 2005 contains a summary of the progress of all the RCA projects implemented in 2005 rather than the achievements of a few selected projects, which was the past practice. He requested the views of the National RCA Representatives in this regard.

There were some suggestions that the reports should only include progress during the reporting year and not incorporate past years achievements. The Meeting agreed that Mr. Dias would request the PLCCs to include a clear statement of their project achievements for the current year in their reports. .

There were also suggestions that the reports should incorporate information on both progress and achievements. Mr. Dias said that if it was agreed that there was a need to change the format of the Annual report this would have to be agreed by the NRs to guide the Secretariat.

Mr. Dias informed the meeting that the current reporting system was not working well and Progress Reports have not been received from a number of National Project Coordinators. He had proposed some recommendations in this regard in his report on the Implementation of the RCA programme in 2005.

The Chair requested the Member States to submit their national reports on time to make it possible for them to be included in the Annual Report.

It was decided that the Member States should submit their comments on the Annual Report including their preferred scope of content for the progress reports, to the RCA Secretariat within one month after the end of the Meeting.

The RCA Secretariat would revise the Annual Report based on these comments and post the final version on the RCA Members Only Homepage.

It was also decided that the RCA Secretariat should re-emphasize the need for National Project Coordinators to provide information pertaining only to the current year in requesting progress reports.

5. Report on the Implementation of the RCA Programme in 2005

Dr. Prinath Dias, Senior Programme Management Officer, gave a presentation under the title "Implementation of the RCA Programme in 2005". The main topics of the presentation were: implementation of the revised RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules (project development and project implementation and monitoring), regional events,

contributions to the RCA programme, RRU database, fellowships and equipment, and project related activities. Mr. Dias reported on actions taken to implement the revised Guidelines and Operating Rules, highlighting further issues that required Member States' attention, and presented a number of recommendations (Annex 5).

Australia stated that comments should be based on the written report rather than the Power Point presentation. This was agreed. Australia inquired the reason for the low Implementation Rate of 66.3% for the RCA Programme in 2005. Mr. Dias explained that the Implementation Rate is calculated based on the Adjusted Budget, which is the sum of the Approved Budget for the current year and the funds carried-over from the previous year. He said that the low Implementation Rate was due to the carry over funds from the previous years and pointed out that the Implementation Rate has increased from 56% in 2004 to 66.3% in 2005. He also said that the disbursements rather than the Implementation Rate were a better indication of programme delivery.

It was decided that the Secretariat should compile information on the programme delivery during the past 10 years and report to the 35th GCM.

Pakistan noted that the designation "RCA Coordinator" had been changed and inquired the reason for this. Mr. Dias explained that it was a result of the new structure of the Department of Technical Cooperation. It was decided to further discuss this issue following Mr. Salema's presentation on "RCA-IAEA Partnership. The Chair agreed that the Member States concern about these changes should be minuted.

Australia proposed that since a number of recommendations have been made in this report presented by Mr. Dias, each recommendation should be reviewed in turn by the Meeting. This proposal was accepted.

Procedure for Development of RCA Projects

The Meeting decided to consider the recommendation regarding identification of regional priorities under a separate Agenda Item.

Project Implementation and Monitoring

The following recommendations in this regard were accepted by the Meeting.

- **National RCA Representatives should maintain close links with the National Project Coordinators and monitor project implementation.**
- **It was agreed that all Member States should report using the same report format. Any Member States that felt that the completion of any section was not appropriate would mark that section “Not Applicable” and this would be accepted by the Secretariat.**
- **Priority should be given to Member States who have submitted progress reports in selecting participants for regional events.**

Nominations for regional events

The Meeting accepted the following recommendations made with regard to the action to be taken by the National RCA Representatives in nominating personnel for regional events.

- the persons nominated for RCA Regional events have the required qualifications,
- are actively engaged in the project activities (i.e are Members of the National Project Teams),
- are briefed on what is expected from them after the completion of training
- the applications submitted to the Agency are sufficiently detailed to verify the above
- the contact details are accurate, and
- the nominations are submitted on time

Local Operating Costs

Pakistan made a strong proposal that the Local Operating costs should be borne by the host Member State which should be considered as an extra-budgetary contribution and be reported in the Annual Report.

The Meeting accepted the following recommendations:

- **The Member States should attempt to meet the Local Operating Costs to the maximum possible extent.**
- **Requests for Local Operating Costs should be made through the National RCA Representatives**
- **Support provided by the Agency for Local Operating Costs should be reported in the RCA Annual Report**

Extra-Budgetary Contributions

The Meeting decided that the Member States, to the maximum possible extent should implement the recommendations made regarding increasing Extra-Budgetary contributions to the RCA Programme.

Contributions to TCDC Activities

The Meeting decided that the Member States, to the maximum possible extent should implement the recommendations made regarding improving contributions to TCDC activities.

Fellowships and Equipment

**The Meeting accepted the recommendation that the Member States should utilize the National Human Resources projects for fellowships and equipment as far as possible.
The Meeting also decided that award of Fellowships and provision of equipment should be based on the approved Work Plans of the projects.**

6. RCA Programme for 2007/2008

At the invitation of the Chair, Mr. Dias briefed the Meeting on the RCA Programme for 2007 / 2008, which had been circulated prior to the Meeting (Annex 6).

Mr. Dias stated that fourteen Project Concepts out of the 20 Project Concepts submitted by the Member States had been selected for further development and project development utilizing Programme Cycle Management Framework would commence after the DDG-TC had written to the Member States on this. He also stated that nine projects were expected to continue or to be extended to the 2007/2008 cycle from the current cycle.

Japan inquired about the reason for the Project Concept Paper titled “ Application of High Precision 3D Radiotherapy for Predominant Cancers in the RCA Region”, which was the first priority in the Human Health Sector, not being selected for further development. Mr. Dias explained that according to the information provided in the Concept Paper only Japan and Republic of Korea had the infrastructure needed to implement this project and pointed out that according the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules, the Member States participating in a project must have the necessary infrastructure. Following further discussions it was decided that the Member States who consider this project to be in an area of national priority and had the required infrastructure should provide this information within two weeks.

The Meeting took note of the proposed RCA Programme for 2007/2008

The Meeting decided that the Member States who consider the proposed project on “ Application of High Precision 3D Radiotherapy for Predominant Cancers in the RCA Region” to be in an area of national priority and had the required infrastructure should inform the TSLCC for Human Health Sector with a copy to the RCA Secretariat within two weeks. It was decided the TSLCC for Human Health should write to the Member States in this regard.

7. Extension of the RCA Agreement

At the invitation of the Chair, Dr. Dias briefed the meeting on the report of Extension of the RCA Agreement (Annex 7). He stated that the Office of Legal Affairs (OLA) of the IAEA had pointed out an ambiguity in the previous Agreement for Extension of the RCA Agreement of 1987 with regard to the date of entry into force and had suggested an amendment to remove this ambiguity. He also pointed out that the OLA had stated that according to international treaty law it was necessary for the extension to be signed by the Heads of State, the Ministers for Foreign Affairs or persons authorized by them. He also said that Japan has proposed the wording “Member State” should be defined in its first appearance in the preambular paragraph rather than in its second appearance in Article 2.

During the discussion that followed, several proposals were made on further revision of the Agreement for Extension. A number of Member States pointed out that adopting the version that was used for previous three extensions would expedite the internal procedures for the fourth extension.

Concern was expressed about the status of the RCA Agreement if at least two Member States do not inform the Director General of the IAEA before the 12th of June of their agreement to extend it. Concern was also raised with regard to the possibility of non-parties to the RCA Agreement adhering to the extension.

Japan stated that the OLA was contacted at the request of the Chair and reported that, although certain room for improvement was found in the proposed draft, OLA had expressed the opinion that adopting the draft as it stood would not create real problems. In this context, it was concluded that it was better not to define the meaning of the "Member States" in the preamble paragraph in order to avoid further complication.”

Mr. Dias read a message received from the Office of Legal Affairs of the IAEA reconfirming the existence of the ambiguity with regard to the date of entry into force and indicating that the final decision in this regard rested with the Member States. The message also stated that the risk of the Agreement lapsing on this account hypothetically existed under the current and proposed drafts, but in practice it was not likely and had not been the case in the past. This message also stated that only the parties to the RCA Agreement could adhere to its extension.

India thanked OLA for its assistance in this regard.

The Meeting decided that

- a) **The version of the Agreement for Extension of the RCA Agreement of 1987 used for the last three extensions should be used for the fourth extension**
- b) **RCA Secretariat should circulate the Agreement for Extension to the Member States through official channels**
- c) **The Member States should take action to ensure the Agreement for Extension will be signed by the Head of State, the Minister for Foreign Affairs or by a person designated by them.**

8. Report of the Chair of the Standing Advisory Committee of the RCARO

Australia, on behalf of the Chair of the RCARO Standing Advisory Committee presented the report. The report of the RCARO SAC meeting is given in Annex 8.

RCA Success Stories

The Meeting was informed that the RCARO SAC had advised the RCARO to verify the accuracy of the technical content of the Success Stories and to obtain the services of a professional writer to prepare the final draft before publication.

RCARO 2005 Fund

The Meeting was informed that the RCARO was advised to forward the recommendations of the Workshop on RCA Environmental strategies to the Working Group on RCA Medium Term Strategy for its consideration in developing future priorities of the RCA Programme.

RCA-UNDP (K) Project

The Meeting was informed that the RCARO was advised to obtain the approval for the Project Concept Paper according to the procedure for initiation of projects by RCARO set out in the Guidelines and Operating Rules.

Collaboration with FNCA

The Meeting was informed that RCARO SAC had deferred this item since it was being taken up under the Agenda of the 28th NRM.

PEMSEA Conference

The Meeting was informed that the SAC advised RCARO to coordinate with the PEMSEA Secretariat regarding the participation of RCA at this Conference.

RCA Information Kit

The Meeting was informed that although the SAC recognized the value of the RCA Information Kit produced by the RCARO, it had advised the RCARO to obtain the approval of the SAC for such publications in the future in order to avoid inaccuracies.

RCARO Work Plan for 2006

The Meeting was informed that RCARO was advised to take action to ensure conformity of its Work Plans to the RCA Medium Term Strategy.

Roles and functions of the RCARO SAC

The Meeting was informed that the RCARO SAC had recommended revision of its roles and responsibilities and that the current RCA Chair should be the Chair of the RCARO SAC. The revised roles and responsibilities of the RCARO SAC are given in Annex 9.

Evaluation of the performance of the Director RCARO SAC

The Meeting was informed that although evaluation of the performance of the Director of RCARO was one of the functions of the RCARO SAC, no guidelines had been developed for this purpose and the RCARO SAC had recommended that the Working Group on RCA Medium Term Strategy should develop guidelines for this purpose.

Enhancement of the Legal Status of RCARO

The Meeting was informed that the RCARO had been advised to elicit from the Government of the Republic of Korea its requirements to enhance the legal status of the RCARO.

The Meeting took note of the Report of the RCARO SAC Chair and approved the revisions proposed by the RCARO SAC to its roles and responsibilities.

The Meeting also requested the RCA Secretariat to look into the possibility of organizing a Workshop on professional writing during the Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinators meeting to assist the TSLCCs in producing good success stories..

9. Report of the Director of the RCARO

The Chair invited Mr. Kun-Mo Choi, the Director of the RCARO, to report the RCARO Work Plan for 2006. (Annex 10). During the discussion that followed, Viet Nam suggested that the RCARO should develop criteria for evaluating the effectiveness of the projects. Australia agreed that this was a genuine issue that needed to be looked at but it was a role for the National Representatives rather than the RCARO and suggested that the Medium Term Strategy Implementation Working Group should have this as one of their tasks. Australia went on to comment that the development of RCA projects had to be done through the establishment of linkages with fund providers. It was important that all projects went through the same procedures that had already been established and agreed.

Mr. Dias said it would be helpful to record as the outcome of this session what was agreed and what was not approved. Australia stated that the development of RCA projects was not within the mandate of the RCARO and that these required the approval of the National RCA Representatives and should go through the agreed process.

The Meeting agreed those activities in the RCARO work plan for 2006 that were within the RCARO mandate.

Pakistan requested deletion of the references to “non-sensitive technologies” and “non-NPT countries” in the Report of the Director RCARO. This view was supported by India.

Pakistan stated that collaboration with any other body has to be with RCA as a whole, without any reference to inclusion or exclusion of individual Member States. . Pakistan further observed that RCARO had been mandated to explore the possibilities of collaboration of RCA with other organization, and not for soliciting views on membership of that organization.

The Meeting approved the RCARO work plan for 2006 subject to the activities being within the RCARO mandate. It was also decided that RCARO should obtain the approval for the Project Concept Paper on the RCA-UNDP (K) Project, according the documented procedures for initiation of projects by RCARO.

The Meeting also requested the RCARO to delete the statements containing references to “non-NPT Countries” and “sensitive technologies” in his report on the consultations with the FNCA.

10. Development of an Intranet for RCA

At the request of the Chair Mr. Dias provided the background to this Agenda Item and stated that Philippines had proposed the establishment of an Intra-net for the RCA and this proposal was included in the Background Paper on this Agenda Item. At the invitation of the Chair, Philippines briefed the Meeting on this proposal. The proposal submitted by the Philippines is given in Annex 11.

Malaysia stated that it would be logical to extend current Members Only Homepage hosted by Malaysia to an Interactive web site rather than developing a new web site. Malaysia also expressed the necessity of assessing the need for an interactive web site.

Australia appreciated the offer of the Philippines but stated that more technical details would be required before a decision could be made. China stated that it would need advice from the IAEA after the technicians of the IAEA assessed the function of RCA MOH and RCARO Homepage. China would like to provide technicians for improvement of RCA MOH or development of RCA INTRANET in the future.

There were a number of comments that although the technology required was relatively simple there were high maintenance and large support costs.

The Meeting decided that RCARO and Malaysia should carry out an assessment of IT needs for RCA with the assistance of the RCA Secretariat and report to the 35th GCM. The Meeting also decided to defer the decision on the proposal made by Philippines to the 35th GCM.

11. RCA Medium Term Strategy

Australia as Chair of the Working Group to prepare the RCA Medium Term Strategy (MTS), introduced the main points of the Working Group Report (Annex 12) and stated that once the MTS document was approved, the next action was to appoint a working group to implement the MTS and establish criteria for measuring performance of the Director of the RCARO. This working group should report to the next RCA GCM.

Mr. Dias noted that the document had been circulated to the National RCA Representatives for their comments prior to finalization. He agreed that the next stage was to adopt the report and set up the working group.

The National RCA Representatives discussed and debated various aspects of the report in some detail and agreement was reached on a text that could be adopted.

The Report was adopted subject to the following two editorial changes:

- **The first dot point in B2 Mission “*To develop regional networks for exchange of technologies, training and equipment*” would be placed last.**
- **The first sentence in B3 Core Values would be amended to read “*The RCA members are committed to high standards of professionalism, safety and ethical behavior in the use of nuclear technologies*”.**

The Meeting also decided to appoint a Working Group comprising of Australia, India, New Zealand and Malaysia, Japan and China (subject to a suitable candidate being available) to draft a work plan for implementation of the RCA Medium Term Strategy.

This Working Group would:

- **draft a work plan for the RCA Medium Term Strategy, in conjunction with the Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinators mid-year meeting;**
- **circulate the draft to all the Member States, to ensure they had the opportunity for full participation in the development of the implementation plan;**
- **develop guidelines for evaluation of the performance of the Director of the RCARO as recommended by the RCARO SAC;**
- **present its report to the 35th RCA GCM.**

12. Medium Term Priorities

At the request of the Chair, Mr. Dias introduced this Agenda Item and stated that this issue has been discussed at the past three Regional Meetings, but action was yet to be

taken. He also mentioned that there was a strong possibility that the IAEA would make it compulsory for regional programmes to be based on Regional Programme Frameworks. (Annex 13).

In summarizing the discussions on this issue, the Chair said that it was agreed that the Working Group on the Medium Term Strategy would work with the Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinators to get the priorities. Australia requested that Member States arrange for information inputs to be supplied to the Working Group before the document was written.

The Meeting decided that the Working Group appointed to develop the Implementation Plan of the Medium Term Strategy should also have the task to identify future priorities for RCA and that the Working Group should consult the Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinators as part of the process. The Member States were requested to inform their priorities to the RCA Secretariat for forwarding to the Working Group.

13. Presentation of the Representative of FNCA

The Chair invited Dr. Sueo Machi, FNCA Coordinator of Japan, who was participating at the Meeting as a Member of the delegation of Japan, to make a presentation on the progress and perspective of FNCA. Dr. Machi's presentation is given as Annex 14. After the presentation, the Chair expressed appreciation for the presentation and the floor was open for discussion.

India thanked Dr. Machi for his excellent presentation and said that they were happy to hear that FNCA activities were complimentary to RCA and not competitive. Regarding the formal collaboration between FNCA and RCA, India recalled the intervention made in the previous RCA NR meetings. While all FNCA members were members of RCA, the reverse was not true. Therefore any cooperation should ensure that all RCA members would be able to participate in RCA and FNCA collaborative work. In their view, merely obtaining the results of such collaborative work would not be sufficient. They recalled that at the 27th NRM, the DDG-TC confirmed that there was no formal collaborative agreement between IAEA and FNCA. India also mentioned that similar difficulties had faced the Agency Board when collaboration was suggested between NEA/OECD and the Agency.

The Chair thanked Dr. Machi for his presentation and stated that a mechanism should be developed to establish collaboration in areas proposed by Dr. Machi.

The Meeting decided the RCARO should develop a mechanism for collaboration between RCA and FNCA and make a proposal to the 35th GCM in this regard.

14. Presentation on RCA-IAEA Partnership, Mr. M. P. Salema, Director, Asia and Pacific Division

Mr. Manase Peter Salema, Director, Division for Asia and the Pacific, Department of Technical Cooperation, gave a presentation under the title “RCA-IAEA Partnership”. He outlined the history of RCA-IAEA partnership, and informed the Meeting of the new structure of TC Department, of the new approach to regional agreements, and of the TC management response to recommendations of 2004 OIOS external evaluation of RCA and ARCAL. Mr. Salema’s presentation is given in Annex 15.

Speaking on the new structure of the TC Department he stated that four separate regional Divisions headed by a Director had been established for the four regions to make the management of the TC Programme of each region more efficient. He stated that the Asia and Pacific Division would comprise of two Sections and the division of Member States is based on their geographical location. He said that he as the Regional Director would be responsible for all policy matters connected with RCA and would be assisted by a Focal Person.

Japan responding to Mr. Salema’s presentation stated that it was very happy to hear that the Director of the Regional Division was responsible for RCA matters. Japan also appreciated the fact the Agency had taken the views expressed by Member States in deciding on the country grouping. Dr. Machi delegate of Japan and representative of FNCA also expressed his appreciation to Mr. Salema for the information provided and stated that the TC Department should make full use of the expertise available in the Technical Divisions of the Agency.

Australia also thanked Mr. Salema for the comprehensive and encouraging presentation and stated that it was encouraged to note that the Agency had taken into account the views of the Member States in deciding on the country grouping and was happy to see the views of the Member States being reflected in the response of the TC Management to the OIOS evaluation. Australia also mentioned the need for the RCA Focal Person to have the authority and responsibilities to function effectively and the need to improve communications with the Member States. Australia further stated that the various concerns by the Member States were exacerbated by poor communication by TC Department on important matters such as restructuring of the Department.

Pakistan highlighted the definitions of the words “coordinator” and the “focal person” and stated these definitions indicate a downgrading of the position.

Malaysia also thanked Mr. Salema and stated that it was happy with the grouping of the Member States in the Asia and Pacific Division.

At the end of the session, the Chair concluded that Mr. Salema’s presentation contained enough answers concerning the restructuring of the TC Department and on OIOS Evaluation of RCA and ARCAL to satisfy the Member States concerns. He said that this information should be taken into account by the Working Group for Medium Term Strategy when developing the implementation plan and priorities and in related work.

Mr. Salema thanked the Member States for their positive comments and said he would consider some of them to be advise to the Agency. He said that the note on the new

structure of the Department allowed the Directors to decide on the details of its implementation and he had decided that the former RCA Coordinator should continue to attend to the same duties as before although his functional designation has been changed to Focal Person. He requested the Member States to consider his presentation as the formal response of the TC Secretariat to the concerns previously expressed by the RCA Member States.

The Meeting expressed its appreciation to Mr. Salema for addressing the concerns of the Member States with regard to RCA – IAEA partnership. It was also decided that information presented by him should be taken into account by the Working Group appointed to prepare the implementation plan of the RCA Medium Term Strategy.

The Meeting also decided that, based on the information presented by Mr. Salema, a further discussion on the matters raised with DDG-TC during the last General Conference Meeting would not be necessary.

15. Outcome of the Discussion with the DDG-TC on the Restructuring of Technical Cooperation Department.

This Item was not taken up for discussion based on the decision made under the previous Agenda Item

16. Appointment of Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinators

The Chair referring to Background Paper RCANRM(28)/8 stated that according to a previous NRM decision, nominations had been received from Member States for TSLCCs in the areas of Agriculture, Industry, Human Health, Environment, Radiation Protection. (Annex 16). He also stated more than one Member State had submitted nominations for the Agricultural, Industrial and Environmental Thematic Sectors. He further pointed out that a decision on this issue had been referred to the 28th NRM by the 34th GCM and he preferred not to postpone the decision on this issue again.. He also said that informal consultations on this issue had been held with interested parties in order to try to reach a consensus.

China and India stated the same view that they were glad to see more than one Member State volunteering to be the TSLC of some sectors. They proposed that: the TSLCCs should be senior experts with management and coordination experience, TSLC had existing technology and foundation in the relevant sector, and the TSLCC should be supported by a strong team with abundant experience in international cooperation and have active support from a majority of the Member States. They also stated that it would not object to the rotation of TSLCs and any decision on the general framework should be effective to all sectors. The written statement submitted by them in this regard is given in Annex 17 China also said that it was willing to continue as the TSLCC for Agriculture in 2007-2010.

Pakistan stated that no decision was made at the 27th NRM to request MS to provide bio-data of the TSLCCs they were proposing, and that the Rules and Guidelines were very clear about it. It was also stated that not a single MS had admitted having made such a

recommendation or interpretation of the minutes as was done later on by the Secretariat and this fact was made very clear at the 34th GC. It had always been a MS taking up the responsibility to be TSLCC, and the past records of the meetings at Korea are very clear, and this simple procedure had been unduly made an issue.

Australia disagreed with this position and referred to the relevant decision recorded in the 27th NRM report.

The Chair proposed appointment of Japan as TSLC for Human Health and Australia for Radiation Protection since other Member States had not submitted nominations for these Sectors.

The general view was that the same approach should be used for all Thematic Sectors. It was also noted that the number of Thematic Sectors might be reduced after the RCA Medium Term Strategy was adopted.

Mr. Dias, RCA Focal Person, expressed the opinion that it would become necessary to develop a criterion for selection of TSLCCs, if a decision cannot be arrived by consensus.

Since it was not possible to arrive at a decision by consensus, it was decided to defer the decision on appointing TSLCCs to the 35th GCM. The Chair expressed his disappointment that no consensus had been achieved in spite of the informal consultations and lengthy discussion within and outside the Meeting. He stated that the RCA has a rich tradition of making decisions based on consensus and wished to see it continue.

Japan pointed out that if the Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinators would cover two Technical Cooperation Programme cycles, the term for the TSLCCs should be 5 years from 2007 to 2011. This is because the TC Programme cycle starting from 2009 will be 3 years, in order to harmonize with the Regular Programme cycle, in accordance with the decision by the November Board of Governors of the IAEA last year.

The Meeting decided to defer the decision on appointing TSLCCs to the 35th GCM and the RCA Chair should have informal consultations with the Member States in this regard.

17. Proposal for a Ministerial Meeting during 29th NRM – Report of the Working Group

Australia at the invitation of the Chair presented the report of the Working Group appointed to look into the possibility of holding a Ministerial Meeting during the 29th NRM and stated that the Working Group did not recommend holding such a Meeting. This recommendation was accepted by the Meeting. In response to a query made by RCARO, Australia, on behalf of the Working Group, stated that this recommendation applied only to the 29th NRM. The report of the Working Group is given in Annex 19.

The Meeting decided not to hold a Ministerial Meeting during the 29th Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives.

18. 35th RCA General Conference Meeting and the 29th Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives.

The Meeting decided to hold the 35th RCAGCM on Friday the 15th September 2006 and the 29th Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives during the week of 19th-23rd March 2007, in Sydney Australia. It was also decided to advance the NRM by one week in the event of the Board of Governors Meeting of the IAEA being held during the same week.

The Meeting also noted that the 30th NRM would be held in Vietnam and the 31st NRM would be held in Japan.

The host countries of the past and future Regional meetings of the National RCA Representatives are given in Annex 20.

19. RCA Participation in the Quadripartite Meeting

At the invitation of the Chair, the National RCA Representative of Malaysia, the former RCA Chair, informed the Meeting that he and the RCA Coordinator attended the Quadripartite Meeting held in September 2005, and, as decided at the 34th GCM, informed the Meeting that the RCA would participate in future Meetings of the Quadripartite Forum if collaborative activities among the Regional Agreements were initiated prior to the Meeting.

Since such collaborative activities had not been initiated, it was decided that the RCA would not participate in the Quadripartite Meeting to be held in 2006.

The Meeting decided that the RCA would not participate in the Quadripartite Meeting to be held in 2006.

20. Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinators Meeting

The Meeting decided that the Annual Meeting of the Thematic Sector Lead Country Coordinators' Meeting should be held on 24th –28th of July 2006, and the Working Group appointed to develop the Implementation Plan of the RCA Medium Term Strategy would also meet during this week

21. Any Other Business

Australia stated that it would not be necessary for the Chair of the RCARO Interim Advisory Committee to be a Member of the RCARO SAC. This view was supported by Pakistan and Philippines.

Pakistan requested deletion of the references to “non-sensitive technologies” and “non-NPT countries” in the Report of the Director RCARO. This view was supported by India.

The Meeting decided that the Chair of the RCARO Interim Advisory Committee need not be a Member of the RCARO SAC.

22. Adoption of the Report of the 28th Regional Meeting of the National RCA Representatives.

The Meeting reviewed the decisions of the Meeting as recorded in the draft minutes circulated by the Secretariat, and requested the Secretariat amend the report based on the views expressed.

Mr. Dias, RCA Focal Person, informed the Meeting that the revised minutes would be circulated to the Member States for further comments and would be revised accordingly before adoption according to the procedure outlined in the RCA Guidelines and Operating Rules.

23. Closing Ceremony

India on behalf of all the delegates thanked the Host Country Thailand for the excellent arrangements made for the Meeting and for the hospitality.

Mr. M. P. Salema, Director of the Asia and Pacific Division, thanked the Host Country for the arrangements made and all the delegates for their contribution to the success of the Meeting through their active participation. He also said that the IAEA would work closely with the Member States with regard to RCA matters and the RCA Secretariat would resolve all issues that might arise through communication with the Member States. He also said that, as requested by the Member States, he had distributed a list of non-RCA projects that were under consideration for further development for implementation under the Technical Cooperation Programme for 2007 / 2008.

Mr. Dias, the RCA Focal Person also thanked all the delegates for their cooperation and the Host Country for all the support he received.

The pro-tem Chair Ms. Jindarom Chvajarenpun, on behalf of the RCA Chair thanked all the participants and wished them a safe journey back to their home countries.