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# UAE Adopts New Measures for Nuclear Safety

(Wam)

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VIENNA — The Permanent Mission of the United Arab Emirates to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) on Friday conveyed the UAE Government's decision to join a number of international conventions related to nuclear safety and security.

The UAE's decision was communicated by Ambassador Hamad Alkaabi, UAE Permanent Representative to the IAEA, who delivered the accession letters from UAE Foreign Minister, Shaikh Abdullah bin Zayed Al Nahyan, to the IAEA Director-general.

Specifically, the UAE communicated its decision to join the IAEA Convention on Nuclear Safety, the Joint Convention on the Safety of Spent Fuel Management and on the Safety of Radioactive Waste Management.

The UAE further communicated its acceptance of the amendment to the Convention on Physical Protection, bringing the latter closer to the requisite number of signatories needed to bring it into force.

"The UAE decision to join these international instruments is consistent with UAE commitment to maintain the highest standards of safety, security and non proliferation, in its efforts to evaluate and develop a peaceful nuclear energy programme," Alkaabi said. "This is a major milestone for the UAE and represents the fulfillment of all commitments made by the UAE related to the latter's accession to various international instruments during its evaluation of a peaceful nuclear energy programme."

The commitments to join these conventions were originally outlined in UAE policy of April 2008, and obligations stemming from these conventions have already been reflected in UAE nuclear energy development plans, strategies and domestic legislation.

The Convention on Physical Protection obligates parties to make specific arrangements and meet defined standards of physical protection for international shipments of nuclear materials. It also obligates parties to receive determined assurances and protection before they export, import or in transit of nuclear materials. It facilitates cooperation in the recovery and protection of nuclear material and criminalises specific unauthorised possession or misuse of nuclear materials.

The amendment to the convention accepted by the UAE better addresses issues of combating nuclear terrorism, smuggling and sabotage.

It legally binds states to the protection of nuclear facilities and materials, storage, and transport. It also provides for enhanced cooperation between states regarding the rapid location and recovery of stolen or smuggled nuclear materials.

The IAEA convention on nuclear safety commits participating states to maintain a high level of safety by meeting international benchmarks. The obligations of the parties are based on the principles contained in the IAEA Safety Fundamentals for Nuclear Installations. These obligations cover activities including siting, design, construction, operation, the availability of adequate financial and human resources, the assessment and verification of safety, quality assurance and emergency preparedness.

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