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INTERNATIONAL NUCLEAR REGULATORS ASSOCIATION ENCOURAGES NUCLEAR SAFETY ENHANCEMENTS WORLDWIDE

The International Nuclear Regulators Association (INRA) has issued a statement strongly encouraging countries that are expanding their programs for peaceful uses of nuclear energy and those developing new nuclear programs to adopt programs of continuous improvement in nuclear safety. Further, enhancement of international cooperation and commitment of all nuclear nations, both existing and future, is key to achieving high levels of nuclear safety worldwide.

Nuclear Regulatory Commission Chairman Dale E. Klein, as INRA's 2008 Chair, sent INRA's statement to the International Atomic Energy Agency asking for assistance in conveying the message to all of IAEA's members. The INRA offered its assistance to countries in developing legislation and independent regulatory entities with a sound safety culture. In its statement, INRA identified the following four commitments countries should consider to achieve and maintain high levels of nuclear safety:

- to have a legislative and regulatory framework to govern the safety of nuclear materials and installations that meets the requirements of the international Convention on Nuclear Safety that meets relevant fundamental safety principles, and appropriate standards;
- to establish an independent nuclear safety regulatory body with authority, competence, and financial and human resources to fulfill its responsibilities to secure a high level of safety;
- to ensure that such an independent regulatory body is able to come to its regulatory judgments or decisions on nuclear safety issues based on expert nuclear safety technical understanding unfettered by outside interest or pressure, and that this is underpinned by an appropriate legal framework, custom and practice and through other measures established by governments and parliaments; and
- to anchor an effective system of nuclear safety regulation and control on a strong national commitment to develop cultures in all relevant organizations, bodies, that emphasize nuclear safety as the priority.

The letters and statement are available in the agency's Agencywide Documents Access and Management System through NRC's website <http://www.nrc.gov> in the Electronic Reading Room at these numbers: ML081150667 and ML081150662.

The INRA, a group of international nuclear regulators formed 11 years ago to provide regulators a forum to discuss nuclear safety, met in mid-March in Washington, D.C., where the importance of nuclear safety was discussed with renewed emphasis due to the increased interest of many countries across the world in developing or expanding nuclear programs. Countries represented at the meeting were: Canada, France, Japan, Spain, South Korea, Sweden, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

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