We are committed to strengthening global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear terrorism.

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About GICNT

The mission of the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) is to strengthen global capacity to prevent, detect, and respond to nuclear terrorism by conducting multilateral activities that strengthen the plans, policies, procedures, and interoperability of partner nations. The GICNT is co-chaired by the Russian Federation and the United States.

GICNT Objectives

Integrate
Integrate collective capabilities and resources to strengthen the overall global architecture to combat nuclear terrorism.

Experience
Bring together experience and expertise from the nonproliferation, counterproliferation, and counterterrorism disciplines.

Provide
Provide the opportunity for nations to share information and expertise in a voluntary, nonbinding framework.

GICNT Statement of Principles

Participants in the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism are committed to the following Statement of Principles to develop partnership capacity to combat nuclear terrorism on a determined and systematic basis, consistent with national legal authorities and obligations they have under relevant international legal frameworks, notably the Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism, the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 Amendment, United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1373 and 1540. They call on all states concerned with this threat to international peace and security, to make a commitment to implement on a voluntary basis the following principles:

1. Develop, if necessary, and improve accounting, control and physical protection systems for nuclear and other radioactive materials and substances;

2. Enhance security of civilian nuclear facilities;

3. Improve the ability to detect nuclear and other radioactive materials and substances in order to prevent illicit trafficking in such materials and substances, to include cooperation in the research and development of national detection capabilities that would be interoperable;

4. Improve capabilities of participants to search for, confiscate, and establish safe control over unlawfully held nuclear or other radioactive materials and substances or devices using them;

5. Prevent the provision of safe haven to terrorists and financial or economic resources to terrorists seeking to acquire or use nuclear and other radioactive materials and substances;

6. Ensure adequate respective national legal and regulatory frameworks sufficient to provide for the implementation of appropriate criminal and, if applicable, civil liability for terrorists and those who facilitate acts of nuclear terrorism;

7. Improve capabilities of participants for response, mitigation, and investigation, in cases of terrorist attacks involving the use of nuclear and other radioactive materials and substances, including the development of technical means to identify nuclear and other radioactive materials and substances that are, or may be, involved in the incident; and

8. Promote information sharing pertaining to the suppression of acts of nuclear terrorism and their facilitation, taking appropriate measures consistent with their national law and international obligations to protect the confidentiality of any information which they exchange in confidence.
Since it was launched by the Russian Federation and the United States in July 2006, the GICNT has grown to include 86 partner nations and five official observer organizations. The GICNT’s unique structure and flexibility have played an important role in its ability to organize more than 80 activities over the past decade that have raised awareness of the threat posed by nuclear and radiological terrorism and provided opportunities for countries to share information, expertise, and best practices in a voluntary, nonbinding framework, to address common challenges. The GICNT also coordinates regularly with its official observers, the International Atomic Energy Agency, INTERPOL, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, European Union, and the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Institute, to help ensure that GICNT activities complement and support their programs of work and promote the use of existing guidance and resources that are available.

86 Partner Nations and 5 Official Observers

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Cabo Verde, Chile, China, Cote d’Ivoire, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, India, Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Rep. of Korea, Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Libya, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Rep. of Macedonia, Madagascar, Malaysia, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Pakistan, Palau, Panama, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Seychelles, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom, United States, Uzbekistan, Vietnam, Zambia

On July 15, 2006, the Russian Federation and the United States launched the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism and called upon like-minded nations to join. The GICNT’s first meeting was held in Rabat, Morocco in October 2006, where participants established the GICNT’s Statement of Principles – a set of eight core nuclear security principles that cover the full spectrum of nuclear terrorism deterrence, prevention, detection, and response objectives. Interested countries and officials may join the GICNT by endorsing the Statement of Principles.

As the GICNT evolved as an institution, partner nations determined a need to restructure in 2010 and established the Implementation and Assessment Group (IAG) to help improve prioritization of work, strengthen coordination of activities, and ensure that GICNT activities are complementary and mutually reinforcing of the work of other international organizations with nuclear security mandates.

The IAG oversees the work of the three GICNT Working Groups: the Nuclear Detection Working Group (currently chaired by Finland), the Nuclear Forensics Working Group (currently chaired by Australia) and the Response and Mitigation Working Group (currently chaired by Morocco).

The three working groups have contributed to global nuclear security through the creation and support of global “communities of experts” that meet to enhance international awareness of nuclear security technical developments; discuss nuclear security challenges and share best practices; and identify tools and resources, as well as national strategies, to address important issues. The community of technical, operational and policy experts supported by each of the GICNT Working Groups has worked together to identify best practices, uplift existing resources, and develop new tools for partner countries to strengthen their national frameworks and adopt sustainable approaches to nuclear security. Each of the working groups has organized dozens of activities and produced important guidance documents in its technical focus area.

At the 2013 Plenary Meeting in Mexico City, GICNT partners called for an increased focus on hosting practical activities such as workshops, experts meetings, and tabletop and field exercises that explore the existing body of knowledge and experiences of partner nations to further implement guidance and to identify best practices and models for overcoming technical and resource challenges. Partners also called for the GICNT to explore the interfaces between Working Groups to promote cross-disciplinary exchanges and dialogue among the different groups of experts that would need to work together in a nuclear security crisis situation.

And through participation in these practical multilateral exercises and activities, partner nations have seen real value in developing multilateral engagements and exchanging best practices to enhance their own national capabilities.

At the 2015 Plenary Meeting, held in Helsinki, partners reaffirmed their interest in continuing the GICNT’s emphasis on practical activities to promote capacity-building across the GICNT’s technical focus areas. Partners also highlighted the importance of working together in developing and improving national-level exercise programs and continuing to focus on cross-disciplinary themes, such as interagency coordination. Partners further suggested an interest in promoting regional approaches to nuclear security, while still identifying common best practices applicable to the broader partnership, and facilitating the exchange of best practices on legal frameworks to support nuclear security.

And after a decade of successful work, partner nations gathered in The Hague for the GICNT’s 10th Anniversary Meeting on June 15-16, 2016, to reflect upon the GICNT’s many accomplishments and identify emerging nuclear security challenges the GICNT is uniquely positioned to address over the next decade to strengthen national capabilities, promote models for bilateral and regional cooperation among partners, and sustain nuclear security capabilities through exercises, international cooperation, and other efforts.
The Implementation and Assessment Group (IAG) is charged with implementing functional areas that have been identified by the Plenary Meetings as priorities and overseeing the efforts of the GICNT’s Working Groups to organize activities that address those priority functional areas. Under the leadership of the IAG Coordinator – a position held first by Spain, then by the Republic of Korea, and currently by the Netherlands – the IAG has continued to advance the GICNT’s mission and serve as an important forum for promoting dialogue between policy, operational, and technical experts. The IAG is currently focused on developing and executing a flexible work program that produces practical results for the GICNT through three working groups: Nuclear Detection, Nuclear Forensics, and Response and Mitigation. Moreover, the IAG has played a critical role in promoting cross-disciplinary activities, such as:

- In April 2014, Malaysia hosted the “Tiger Reef” workshop and tabletop exercise, which highlighted the importance of collaboration between emergency response and nuclear forensics personnel across shared mission spaces following an RN terrorism incident;

- In May 2015, the European Commission hosted the “Radiant City” tabletop and field exercise, held at the Institute for Transuranium Elements in Karlsruhe, Germany, that underscored the importance of integrating nuclear detection and nuclear forensics capabilities in supporting a law enforcement investigation into stolen RN materials; and

- In May 2016, Australia hosted the “Kangaroo Harbour” workshop and exercise, to promote best practices in international information-sharing, including issuing and responding to international notifications and assistance requests, during an escalating nuclear security crisis situation.
The development of an effective and sustainable national nuclear detection architecture is a critical part of a State’s efforts to deter, detect, and interdict nuclear and radioactive material that is out of regulatory control and, ultimately, to prevent acts of nuclear terrorism. The Nuclear Detection Working Group (NDWG) is currently chaired by Finland and focuses on building and enhancing national detection capabilities. The work of the NDWG is product-oriented and focused on raising awareness of and developing practical guidance on detection challenges and mitigating strategies; promoting the transfer of knowledge and experience between detection experts and other key stakeholders; and holding activities that promote partners’ practical implementation of nuclear detection best practices.

Developing a Nuclear Detection Architecture Series

The NDWG has published four volumes in the Developing a Nuclear Detection Architecture Series. The documents highlight a risk-informed, and defense-in-depth architecture that addresses the multiple layers through which an adversary may transport radioactive or nuclear material out of regulatory control from a point of origin to a target. The series includes:

- Volume 1: Model Guidelines Document for Nuclear Detection Architectures
- Volume 2: Guidelines for Awareness, Training and Exercises
- Volume 3: Guidelines for Planning and Organization
- Volume 4: Guidelines for Detection Within a State’s Interior
Nuclear forensic science enhances a State’s ability to assess and establish linkages between nuclear and radioactive material, and those who have attempted to transport, possess, or use it without legitimate State control.

The Nuclear Forensics Working Group (NFWG) is currently chaired by Australia. The objectives of the working group are to raise awareness of nuclear forensics among policymakers, assist with the development and sustainment of nuclear forensic capabilities, foster intra- and inter-governmental relationships, and promote the exchange of best practices.

The Nuclear Forensics Fundamentals for Policy Makers and Decision Makers document raises awareness of the importance of nuclear forensics to enhancing nuclear material security and discouraging illicit uses of nuclear and other radioactive material.

The Exchanging Nuclear Forensics Information: Benefits, Challenges, and Resources best practices guide provides an overview of how the exchange of nuclear forensics information within and between States may support investigations and strengthen global nuclear security. This document suggests mechanisms that may facilitate the exchange of sensitive information, as well as associated challenges and restrictions.
Response and Mitigation Working Group

The ability of a government to respond to terrorist incidents involving nuclear or other radioactive materials is recognized as an essential element of a nuclear security framework. The response to those incidents must be made in an efficient, coordinated, and timely manner, so as to protect life, health, and property, while also keeping in mind potential national security and investigative priorities.

The Response and Mitigation Working Group (RMWG) is currently chaired by Morocco with a principal focus on examining best practices related to terrorist threats or incidents involving radiological/nuclear material. The RMWG coordinates activities to promote information exchange among interdisciplinary groups of experts to identify best practices and produce appropriate response recommendations.

RMWG partners have collaboratively developed the Fundamentals for Establishing and Maintaining a Nuclear Security Response Framework, a collection of key considerations that may inform a country when designing or enhancing its national nuclear/radiological response system for security incidents. This Fundamentals Document is a living document, meant to be routinely updated and improved through follow-on practical activities, input from partner nations, and the addition of case studies to illustrate key concepts.
Exercises reinforce important skills related to nuclear security, promote awareness of nuclear security risks, as well as underscore the need for persistent vigilance. The GICNT has developed numerous activities and products to promote exercises as a tool for sustaining and improving nuclear security capabilities, including by organizing over 25 multilateral discussion-based and field exercises. The GICNT’s 2013 Plenary Meeting called for an increased GICNT focus on exercises and other practical activities to promote the implementation of existing guidance and best practices, and the 2015 Plenary Meeting identified promoting key fundamentals of exercise design, implementation, and self-assessment as a priority area of focus. In particular, the GICNT has supported the development of:

- Multilateral exercises that raise awareness of nuclear security challenges, bring together policy, technical, and operational experts from different fields and countries, and promote capacity building across core GICNT focus areas;
- Bilateral and regional exercises, where countries organize national-level teams to enhance interagency coordination in responding to nuclear security events, while also strengthening bilateral and regional cooperation with other partners;
- Products and activities that demonstrate the importance of national nuclear security exercise programs and key resource considerations and models for developing, implementing, and sustaining such programs; and
- The GICNT’s Exercise Playbook, which currently contains 15 realistic scenarios illustrating challenges related to detection of material out of regulatory control at the exterior, border, and interior layers of a State’s national nuclear detection architecture. The tabletop exercises in the Playbook are designed to provide architecture-implementing organizations with an interactive training supplement, challenging participants to apply their knowledge and experience to solving detection problems that might emerge in the real world. The GICNT’s Nuclear Forensics and Response and Mitigation Working Groups are also developing their own modules for the “Exercise Playbook” to promote implementation of core nuclear forensics and response capabilities, drawing from existing resources, expertise and best practices in these areas.

GICNT Partner Nation Contributions

As a voluntary partnership, the GICNT’s success will continue to be dependent upon the contributions of its partner nations and official observers in hosting, supporting the development of, and participating in GICNT activities. Partner nations can advance the GICNT’s mission and strengthen global nuclear security in many important ways, including, but not limited to:

- Hosting or supporting the planning, execution, and review of future GICNT experts meetings, workshops, tabletop or field exercises, or higher-level policy meetings;
- Organizing a national-level workshop or exercise by using GICNT documents and exercise materials and agreeing to share lessons learned and best practices with other partner nations;
- Contributing to GICNT tools and products that are currently under development, such as the “Exercise Playbook;”
- Implementing best practices identified in the GICNT’s seven guidance documents and sharing experience with other partner nations through case studies or presentations at future events;
- Developing plans for bilateral or regional exercises, technical meetings, workshops, or other activities that would promote regional approaches to nuclear security and opportunities to identify common best practices that could be shared with the full GICNT partnership.
For more information about the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, please contact: globalinitiative@state.gov

GICNT.org

The GIIP offers a secure, unclassified web portal that supports information sharing among GICNT partners. The GIIP includes information about past and future events, including exercise outcomes and reference materials developed by GICNT that serve to build and enhance key nuclear security capabilities.

https://Global-Initiative.org