



# INTERMEDIATE INT. ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY

## Background Guide

University of Colorado Boulder Model United Nations

Committee Chair: Parth Mishra

- To maintain international peace and security

- To develop friendly relations among nations

- To cooperate in solving international problems and in promoting respect for human rights

- To be a center for harmonizing the actions of nations

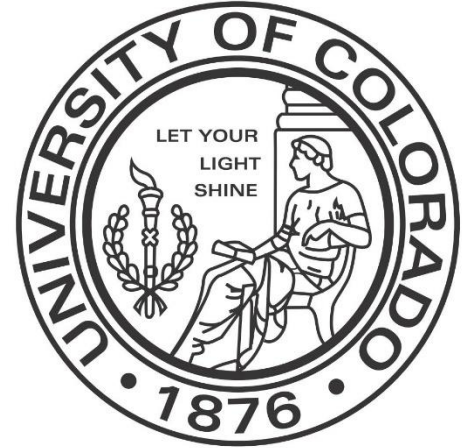


Dear Delegates,

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2016 University of Colorado  
Boulder Model United Nations Conference.

The three topics that will be covered under Intermediate IAEA are:

- I. Strengthening IAEA Safeguards
- II. Improving International Cooperation in Response to  
Nuclear Crises



In this guide, background information will be provided on the topics presented as well as other resources to reference while researching for your delegation. We fully hope that you will explore member states positions and policies further. Many items will be brought up in the guide that may be a valuable starting point for your research. Prior to the conference each delegation should submit a position paper representing the views of their delegation on the issues in the agenda. Please review the guidelines for Model United Nations before attending and be familiar with policies on conduct and guidelines.

We hope to see you soon,

Parth Mishra

Committee Chair

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## Introduction

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is a unique agency that works within the UN to:

1. Foster science and technology in the realm of nuclear technology
2. Develop safety standards for the continued usage of nuclear technology
3. Ensure the provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) are carried out through its safeguards system

In fulfilling these requirements, the IAEA strives to maintain a balance of ensuring non-proliferation of weaponized nuclear technology and promoting the safe use of nuclear energy. Maintaining this balance is crucial due to the very political nature of nuclear technology since its inception in the 20th century. The agreed upon safeguards system in the NPT form a foundational verification system that the IAEA leverages to ensure that Member States are actively taking steps towards nuclear disarmament as well as ensuring Member States do not continue to build nuclear weapons.

## Structure

Membership into the IAEA is automatically granted to all UN Member States, all of whom are represented in the General Conference (GC). (States may withdraw, however.) The GC is an annual meeting of all IAEA members and is the primary decision-making body for the IAEA. Member States each have a single vote during this conference. The purpose of the GC is three-fold:

1. Decide the Agency's budget.
2. Approve the Annual Report submitted by the Board of Governors
3. Give Recommendations to the Board

The aforementioned Board of Governors is comprised of 35 elected IAEA Member States and is known as the main executive organ of the IAEA. Board Members are either elected by the outgoing Board Members to a

single year term or by decision of the GC for a two year term to ensure parity in regional representation. The Board of Governors convenes outside of the GC five times a year as well.

## Function and Power

The findings of the IAEA are often relevant in numerous areas within the UN and because of that, reports generated by the IAEA are used to inform inter-agency agreements and decisions such as those made under General Assembly, Security Council, ECOSOC, etc. The nature of these reports can vary from being informational with regards to the safety and environmental concerns of nuclear technology, the economics aspects, or even international security issues that may come about from violations of Safeguard agreements under NPT. These safeguard agreements have often come under scrutiny as there have been several historical instances of countries being able to hide nuclear programs from IAEA inspectors. In response, the protocols that put safeguards in place are often target for expansion to allow greater, unrestricted access to Member States' nuclear facilities. In addition to security concerns, much of the current work of the IAEA is centered on ensuring preventing and mitigating damage from nuclear disasters such as the Fukushima Daiichi Accident. Under these goals, the IAEA seeks to use its framework to update and add additional protocols to ensure international peace with regards to nuclear technology while also strengthening the ability of member states to utilize these technologies safely and effectively.

## Strengthening IAEA Safeguards

The safeguard system overseen by the IAEA has long remained one of its core defining features and has had a long, controversial past. In 1970, as part of the newly ratified Non-Proliferation Treaty, the implementation of a set of agreements called “safeguards” that aimed to provide an acceptable framework from which all nuclear activity can be monitored and accounted for. Not many existing international frameworks or policies have ever attempted to gain such unrestricted access, thus demonstrating how highly Member States agree that the proliferation of Nuclear Weapons poses one of the greatest threats to international peace and security. The safeguard agreement between the IAEA essentially defines a framework from which the IAEA is allowed to verify the legitimacy of a country’s declared nuclear operations and stockpiles. The purpose of this is to legitimize claims from countries about their nuclear resources and programs as well as to ensure that no nuclear materials or technologies are being leveraged for use in nuclear weapons. Provisions were made for disarmament so that Member States with existing nuclear weapons prior to 1968 are phasing them out while States that did not have any prior weapons agree not to create new nuclear weapons programs.

The verification system is now named as the State System of Accounting and Control (SSAC). In addition to SSAC which maintains an overview of the nuclear accounting for Member States, further verification comes from a series of activities as a means of ensuring accuracy for the SSAC. These activities are built into the safeguard agreements and are centered around “on-site inspections, visits, and ongoing monitoring and evaluation.” The timing of these inspections by the IAEA can range from routine inspections that are known well in advance to some inspections that can take place on very short notice. Occasionally the IAEA can choose to perform an immediate investigation should they identify any discrepancies in Member States’ nuclear reports.

There have been several instances in the past where the issue of safeguards and their protocols have been brought to light. For example, in 1990, Iraq was found to have been harboring a nuclear plant that was undeclared and therefore not known to exist by the IAEA. In the wake of this incident, Additional Protocols

(AP) were adopted to allow the IAEA to further verify the accuracy of Member States' reports by visiting areas that are tangentially related to nuclear facilities such as mining operations and other places where nuclear material could have a presence. Since then, additional safeguard protocols for tackling these unique problems were developed for regional issues such as Voluntary Offer Agreements (VOA) and Item-Specific Safeguard Agreements. These agreements have had varying levels of success, especially in cases where certain countries that are members of the IAEA but not party to the NPT.

The challenges faced by the safeguard system have been the subject of much scrutiny and tend to revolve around several issues that delegates should be aware of, including, but not limited to:

1. How can the safeguard protocols maintain a balance of allowing Member States to develop nuclear programs while simultaneously ensuring that no materials are being diverted to weapons programs?  
What level of access is needed?
2. How can the IAEA address issues of non-compliance with these aforementioned protocols? How should states be allowed to withdraw from being party to the NPT and consequently, safeguard protocols?
3. Is there an optimal policy for safeguards that can be more relevant or adaptable to the changing nuclear landscape of the future?

## Improving International Cooperation in Response to Nuclear Crises

Nuclear power, while inherently a very clean and renewable resource, has posed many problems that continue to slow its adoption and development. Significant strides have been made in improving nuclear safety protocols yet there are still many shortcomings as evidenced by such recent events like the Fukushima Daiichi nuclear disaster in 2011 which heavily exacerbated issues caused by a tsunami that hit the area. Apart from the issue of maintaining nuclear peace, another one of the main pillars of the IAEA is to ensure the safe use of nuclear materials and to develop appropriate response frameworks that prevent, mitigate, and contain Nuclear crises of varying types.

The main issues of Nuclear waste continue to revolve around its radiation, transportation, and disposal management. Increased expenditures in nuclear technology throughout the 20th century prompted a need for standardized measures to address safety, emergency response, and victim compensation. In 1960, the Paris Convention on Third Party Liability in the Field of Nuclear Energy created the first internationally agreed upon standards for liability and compensation in the event of a nuclear production emergency. Another approach was made through the 1963 Vienna Convention on Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage in conjunction with the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC) which provided a method for determining liability and compensation. Unfortunately, few Member States were party to these agreements and even fewer States were party to protocol amendments and updates in 1997. The 2004 protocol update only has two Party States.

As a way of promoting increased international cooperation, in 2007 the IAEA launched the Global Nuclear Safety and Security Network (GNSSN) in 2007 as a means of creating an accessible network of information and expert consulting at national, regional, and global levels. The GNSSN serves as an umbrella organization to coordinate the information sharing required in order to promote increased international cooperation in regards to nuclear safety and emergency preparedness. Additionally, it should be noted that the GNSSN represents a very modern take on promoting international cooperation as it is mainly a “virtual” network that relies on the latest communication technology to manage the vast information available to Member States at a global scale.

Even with such advances, there are still many challenges that remain that the IAEA is working on solving. In light of the 2015 Fukushima incident, greater importance was placed on establishing better measures to safeguard nuclear facilities in response to natural disasters and other external disruptions. In addition to sharing information on how Member States may cooperate on the international level, the IAEA seeks to find new ways to effectively communicate emergency response procedures at varying levels including national and regional.

The IAEA has attempted to incorporate some of these goals into its Action Plan on Nuclear Safety but like many international protocols, there is great reluctance from many Member States to adhere to these standards, thus nullifying their theoretical impact. Given the far reaching nature of nuclear incidents, it is necessary for Member States to be able to react and allocate a large amount of resources at a moments notice. Making this happen however, has proven to be a big policy challenge that must be addressed.

In this light, delegates should consider the following when attempting to address this issue:

1. What role should the IAEA have in the event of a nuclear disaster? Should it take on the responsibility of informing the public of what is going on? What about when this occurs in a non-Member State?
2. Are there any potential opportunities to work with other U.N. bodies to address the aforementioned issues?
3. How can the IAEA best maintain a balance of preserving Member State interests while simultaneously getting Member States to collectively respond and participate in mitigating nuclear disasters?