

# Chapter 4

## The GICNT Contribution to Nuclear Security



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Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism is a voluntary partnership of 88 nations and five international observer organizations. Both the partners and the observers work together to improve international capacity to prevent, detect and respond to nuclear terrorism. The network is co-chaired by the Russian Federation and the United States. The Implementation and Assessment Group (IAG) is led by a coordinator, and Finland serves in this role in years 2017–2019. Three formal working groups are dedicated to nuclear detection (chaired by the United Kingdom), forensics (chaired by Canada) and response and mitigation (chaired by Argentina).

Important cross-disciplinary themes are currently sustainability of nuclear security architecture, law enforcement investigations and legal frameworks. GICNT's activities have been lately directed towards organizing table-top and field exercises, workshops and seminars and meetings that enhance national capabilities and encourage international cooperation. The GICNT has also produced several foundational documents and key resources that are tangible, practical outcomes from the networks activities. The GICNT is unique in that it draws from a broad range of communities of expertise in all of its work; policy, law enforcement, technical experts on radiation safety, border guards and customs officers and scientists. The result is an exchange of best practices between countries and across fields of expertise, the formation of relationships between and within authorities, and stronger relationships between and within nations. This contributes to the global nuclear security architecture and our shared objective of preventing, deterring and responding to the threat of nuclear terrorism.

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Mr. Chairman, Dear Participants of the Conference, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Thank you for inviting me to join you today; it is a great honor to be here and participate with the distinguished speakers and panelists at this conference. I want to congratulate both the IAEA and the European Commission/Euratom for the first 60 years during which they have contributed to nuclear safety and security.

My own country, Finland was actually the first country in the world to sign in 1971 and ratify in 1972 the Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement with the IAEA, required from countries joining the Treaty on Nuclear Non-proliferation of Nuclear Weapons or NPT. When Finland joined the European Union in 1995 the agreement was replaced with the current arrangement in force between the IAEA, Euratom and the non-nuclear-weapon member states of the European Union. With a developing program of peaceful use of nuclear energy, our collaboration with the relevant international bodies remains strong.

Today I want to share with you my reflections on how the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, or GICNT, contributes to the global nuclear security architecture.

As many of you are likely already aware, the GICNT is extremely **unique in its structure**—it is a voluntary partnership of 88 nations and five international organizations, including the European Union, IAEA and Interpol, serving as official observers. Both the partners and the observers work together to improve international capacity to prevent, detect and respond to nuclear terrorism.

Partner nations join the initiative through a political endorsement of eight core nuclear security principles, which are very closely *aligned with this event's focus* on international cooperation to enhance nuclear safety and security. GICNT is *co-chaired* jointly by the Russian Federation and the United States and has three formal *Working Groups* dedicated to nuclear detection, response and mitigation, and forensics. In addition to these priority areas, during our high-level Plenary meeting in Tokyo this past June, there was agreement that GICNT should continue to put emphasis on furthering the dialogue where there are interfaces between working groups, including on *sustainability, law enforcement investigations, and legal frameworks*.

As the *Implementation and Assessment Group Coordinator of the GICNT*, one of my responsibilities is to oversee the activities of the working groups, to find the nexuses between them, and to find ways to ensure *our work is complementary* to that of other nuclear security entities *without being duplicative*. I'll serve in this role, for Finland, until 2019.

Some of the key priorities we will work on include, for example:

- Maintaining the strong work of the three technical working groups in detection, forensics and response;
- Continuing the strategic direction of the GICNT; strengthening our work and ensuring continuity and implementation of proposals made at the 2015 and 2017 Plenaries and 10th Anniversary meeting; and
- Focusing on interfaces between working groups and the cross-disciplinary area of sustainability, law enforcement investigations, and legal frameworks.

The GICNT has a “hands-on” approach to nuclear security. In the past few years the activities have been directed even more than previously to organizing table-top and field exercises, workshops and seminars that enhance national capabilities and *encourage international collaboration*.

Through the events the GICNT wants to *promote the exchange of information*, and to share views on the implementation of nuclear security *guidance and best practices*.

It is a remarkably flexible partnership and one of its many *strengths is its convening power*. A lot can be accomplished, and a lot has been accomplished through GICNT, because we are able to get technical experts, policy makers, and decision-makers all in the same room. The GICNT is unique in that it draws from a broad range of communities of expertise in all of its work: policy, law enforcement, technical experts, border guards and customs officers, and scientists.

My own country, Finland has participated actively in the work of the GICNT in the course of past years. The close cooperation between authorities involved in nuclear security is a familiar way of operating in Finland and we have been encouraged and benefitted from GICNT’s activities which bring together relevant experts to work with the challenges of preventing, detecting and responding to nuclear security events.

As we all know, improving *information exchange to support coordination in a crisis* is a never ending process and remains one of the most significant challenges to nuclear security. So often what we find during GICNT events and exercises is that one of the best ways to improve information exchange is to *build and strengthen relationships*, including interagency, between countries and across international partnerships. This is an important part of building sustainable nuclear security architecture and something that has to be done before there is an unwanted event where effective and immediate coordination is required.

In our events, we bring together communities that might not have previously had a forum in which to meet and, when we get these different communities together in a room, the ensuing *dialogues are truly invaluable*. We work hard to make sure that national delegations to GICNT exercises include representatives from a range of organizations and disciplines. Most of our events include a diverse international audience. Some are focused on a specific regional challenge and we emphasize regional participation.

The result is an exchange of best practices between countries and across fields of expertise, the formation of relationships, between and within authorities, and at the most basic level—*stronger relationships between and within nations*. This enhances the global architecture and our shared objective of preventing, deterring and responding to the threat of nuclear terrorism.

For example, last November we held a *workshop on medical response in Panama* to address challenges in deploying and coordinating medical and public health resources in response to a terrorist incident involving radioactive materials.

Countries from throughout the region attended and the conversations between law enforcement, the medical community, and border authorities helped *establish new relationships that are critical to have in place in advance* of an incident. This

event was conducted under the Response and Mitigation Working Group, now chaired by Argentina.

Argentina was also host to a successful regional Radiological Emergency Management Exercise “Paihuen II” held in Bariloche, Argentina just two weeks ago. And next week our focus will be on similar type of a regional exercise in Central Asia, hosted by the government of Tajikistan.

This past March, the GICNT collaborated with European Commission’s Joint Research Centre to hold “Magic Maggiore”, a workshop bringing together technical, scientific, and operational experts with specific expertise in the area of technical reachback. This is a great example our how our *collaboration with official observer organizations adds value* to the initiative and its events.

I would like to personally *thank the European Union*, and all of our observers and partners, for their ongoing commitment to work together.

Magic Maggiore built upon the success of recent GICNT exercises, “NORTHERN LIGHTS” held in Helsinki, Finland, “RADIANT CITY,” held at the JRC in Karlsruhe, Germany, and “Exercise Olympus,” held in Bucharest, Romania. These exercises stressed that nuclear detection requires a whole-of-government approach that incorporates technical and non-technical capabilities in support of an investigation into illicit trafficking of nuclear and other radioactive material.

Ultimately, outcomes from GICNT activities like Magic Maggiore can help *to mitigate common challenges* to information sharing and technical reachback support to Front Line Officers. The workshop raised awareness about the importance of established channels to access technical expert support and promoted the exchange of models and mechanisms to share best practices among all European Union and GICNT partner nations. This event fell under the Nuclear Detection Working Group, now chaired by the United Kingdom.

The Nuclear Forensics Working Group, now chaired by Canada, focuses on raising awareness of nuclear forensics among policymakers and decision makers. As you know, *nuclear forensics* is a burgeoning field and there is a real need to *build capacity and expertise around the world*.

Next month, the Nuclear Forensics Working Group will hold an exercise in Bucharest, Romania for countries in the *Black Sea region* focused on how *nuclear forensics may support an investigation* into a nuclear security incident. This builds on the other activities aimed at identifying best practices to support efforts to deter and prosecute illicit acts involving radioactive material.

Other past events on this theme have included the 2015 Glowing Tulip Mock Trial and 2017 Vigilant Marmot legal frameworks workshop which focused on the importance of adopting national legislation criminalization penalties for illicit acts outlined in international legal frameworks.

Exercise Sentinel was held in Sofia, Bulgaria in May 2017 and aimed to *promote nuclear security exercise capabilities* among partner nations through the development and implementation of national level exercise programs. GICNT partners Bulgaria and the United Kingdom hosted the workshop jointly to identify best practices to establish a national exercise program, sustain and enhance national capabilities through exercise programs, and promote best practices for exercise

evaluation and feedback. GICNT plans future activities to enhance national capabilities to develop, conduct and evaluate nuclear security exercises; in particular, the Nuclear Detection Working Group is spearheading efforts to develop a virtual community of experts to share and promote national level exercise programs.

Through organization of more than 90 events, the GICNT has been able to develop a strong knowledge on how to facilitate cooperation and coordination at national and international level. The work continues with several planned activities that will take place in Europe, where the GICNT has organized already nearly 40 events, and in the Asia region.

In addition to advancing information exchange and technical dialogue in the Working Group areas of Forensics, Detection and Response and Mitigation, GICNT has produced several *foundational documents and key resources that are tangible, practical outcomes*. For example, the GICNT Exercise Playbook contains fictional yet realistic scenarios, problem statements and discussion questions for partners to “play” on their own and test national protocols.

Ultimately, GICNT’s strength and what allows it to contribute to the bigger picture of global nuclear security and non-proliferation lies in its *network of partners and observer organizations*.

As the IAG Coordinator, I will promote efforts within our network to further our collaboration with the European Union, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, INTERPOL, United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute and the IAEA. I will draw attention to key challenges in nuclear security through exercises, workshops and other practical activities that engage a range of subject matter experts and promote a coordinated, interdisciplinary approach at national and international levels to respond to any threat by terrorists involving nuclear and radioactive materials.

I feel it is imperative to our success that we keep the key political decision makers acutely aware of the dangers of nuclear terrorism, and get their support both for the development of sustainable national capabilities and for fostering international efforts to combat nuclear threats.

As we all know, the only effective way to respond to the threat of nuclear terrorism, and to strengthen the global nuclear security architecture, is to *work together*. I thank you for your time and for the continued collaboration through the GICNT.

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