

FISA 2022 and EURADWASTE'22

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**Keynote: ENSREG commitment to continuous improvement of nuclear safety
when new knowledge and experience are available: Progress, Lessons learned
and Challenges**

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen, distinguished guests.

I'm honoured to have this special opportunity to speak at the 10th Euratom Conference on Reactor Safety and Euratom Conference on Radioactive Waste Management.

In my capacity as Chair of the European Nuclear Safety Regulators Group - ENSREG, I would like to use this opportunity to inform you shortly about the Group's ongoing and future activities.

ENSREG's fundamental key mission is to promote the highest standards and continuous improvement of nuclear safety, radioactive waste and spent fuel management and their regulation, as well as to promote openness and transparency in those areas. The 2021-2023 ENSREG work programme continues to be shaped largely by the Amended Nuclear Safety Directive and the Council Directive 2011/70/EURATOM related to the safe management of spent fuel and radioactive

waste. Hence, a major proportion of ENSREG's work within the current time framework focuses on supporting the safety objectives established by these Directives and on assisting the EU Member States with their implementation. During this period ENSREG will also continue to facilitate the follow-up implementation of the National Action Plans following the European Stress Tests. Furthermore, as in its previous work programme, ENSREG will continue to provide advice to the European Commission in matters such as nuclear power plants long-term operation, decommissioning, nuclear safety cooperation and emergency preparedness and response. An emerging, new topic, which could arise within the current period is related to the safety aspects and licencing of Small modular reactors arousing great interest among the international nuclear community. This particular topic requires further ENSREG's discussions with the Commission with an aim to identify the specific areas where ENSREG could provide its advice. The ongoing work programme also covers certain actions of a longer programme framework that have started during an earlier period. This refers mainly to the follow-up actions stemming from the first EU Topical Peer Review on ageing management of nuclear power plants and research reactors as well as actions related to the arrangement and implementation of the second EU Topical Peer Review on fire protection at nuclear installations.

Allow me now to highlight some of the ENSREG's main activities focusing on the following topics:

Firstly,

- **Supporting the implementation of the Nuclear Safety Directive and the Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Directive:** Whilst it is the Member States' responsibility to transpose and implement the European legislation, ENSREG continues to play a role in assisting Member States and the Commission in several areas of work under these Directives. Whereas no further formal reporting is envisaged under Article 9 of the Nuclear Safety Directive, the implementation will focus and continue in particular on Articles 8a-8c (the Nuclear Safety Objective). In addition, ENSREG will also provide support to the Commission and Member States in addressing any issues identified in the Commission's Report to the Council and Parliament on the implementation of the NSD.

Another essential task for ENSREG during this period will be the establishment of framework to implement the second EU Topical Peer Review in close cooperation with WENRA as required by the Nuclear Safety Directive and building on the experience of the first such peer review completed in 2018. The second Topical Peer Review, as decided by ENSREG at its plenary session in November 2020, is dedicated to the topic of fire protection at nuclear installations. While the preparations for the second TPR are ongoing, those countries that had participated in the first TPR on ageing management will also need to report on the activities identified in their respective National Action Plans.

With regards to the implementation of the Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Directive, ENSREG will continue supporting Member States, particularly in relation to the specific aspects of interface between National Programmes and National Reports. The three-year reporting cycle under Article 14 of the Spent Fuel and Radioactive Waste Directive proceeds as foreseen.

Among other main activities of ENSREG are the following:

- **Provision of advice to the European Commission as well as coordination of Member States' Regulatory Authorities**, in particular on matters related to safety of nuclear installations and management of spent fuel and radioactive waste: Under this thematic area the European Commission has requested the advice of ENSREG regarding the revision and implementation of international assistance and technical cooperation programmes, such as those carried out under the European Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation (EI INSC) formerly known as the Instrument for Nuclear Safety Cooperation (INSC).
- **Facilitating active EU's participation in the IAEA peer reviews and conducting oversight over the completion of the stress tests' 'National Action Plans'**: ENSREG's continued promotion and facilitation of the EU's participation in the IAEA's peer reviews focuses primarily on the IRRS (Integrated Regulatory Reviews Service) and the ARTEMIS (Integrated Review Service for Radioactive Waste and Spent Fuel Management,

Decommissioning and Remediation) missions, thereby supporting the continuous improvement of nuclear safety and management of spent fuel and radioactive waste in Europe. The group will also seek opportunities to improve the effectiveness of the missions in cooperation with the IAEA, aimed to identify and exploit synergies, where feasible. The long-term goal of a single peer review mission covering the requirements of both EU Directives will also be explored.

ENSREG played a pivotal role in the 2011 European Stress Tests and has since held two workshops to review progress on the National Action Plans developed by Member States as I've already outlined in my earlier remarks. It will continue to provide oversight through its Working Group 1 on Nuclear Safety through the agreed biannual reporting schedule. Further, it will also contribute to the organization of peer reviews in third states (outside of the EU), particularly those located in the EU neighbourhood.

To conclude I would like to emphasise the ENSREG's permanent commitment to transparency **Seeking to further enhance the openness throughout the group's activities**, including by providing a revised set of guidelines to Member States on reporting and transparency as part of the ENSREG wide work on reporting under the respective nuclear safety-related Directives. Another example is the ENSREG's a communication strategy, implementing a new approach to the ENSREG website. I would be remised

not to mention the upcoming sixth European Nuclear Safety Conference in June 2022.

The tasks and expected outcomes stemming from the above topics are expected to be performed by ENSREG following a prioritised approach of a hierarchical nature in the following manner:

- High Priority tasks which must be undertaken by ENSREG in accordance with Commission's decision no. 2007/530/Euratom; any other legal obligations; or work of major strategic importance to nuclear safety, management of spent fuel of radioactive waste.
- Medium priority tasks which should be undertaken in support of the ENSREG's purpose commonly related to the work of a strategic importance for nuclear safety, management of spent fuel and/or radioactive waste.
- Low priority tasks which could be carried out to support ENSREG's role, but may have a limited contribution to nuclear safety, management of spent fuel and/or radioactive waste. These would for instance comprise of tasks of an administrative nature.

Finally, on behalf of ENSREG, I would like to conclude by using this opportunity to reiterate the group's lasting commitment to the continuously enhanced nuclear safety, implementation of new knowledge and experience as well as good practice whenever applicable and available.

I thank you and I wish this conference provides all of us with a valuable format during which we can enrich our knowledge and expand networks with an aim to collectively work together to strive for a continuous enhancement of nuclear safety.

Thank you for your attention.