



Contribution ID: 8

Type: Wedge Participant

Accession to the safeguards Agreements: Sharing Ghana's Experience from the Historical Perspective

Since the early 1970s, Ghana has been an important player in international cooperation on nuclear non-proliferation. Ghana has been a committed signatory of the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) since 1968, and further demonstrated its commitment to the peaceful uses of nuclear technology by signing the safeguards agreement in 1975, and the Protocol Agreement in 2004. Although, Ghana operated no research reactor, and had no nuclear regulator at the time of signing the NPT, it now operates a 30 kW Miniature Neutron Source Reactor (MNSR), Ghana Research Reactor-1 (GHARR-1), which was acquired in 1994. In 2017, the Highly Enriched Uranium (HEU) core of GHARR-1 was converted to a Low Enriched Uranium (LEU) core under the direction of the Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GRTI) in furtherance of Ghana's commitment to peaceful uses of nuclear technology. Two years before the core conversion project, Ghana has established an independent nuclear regulator called the Nuclear Regulatory Authority. Ghana's long and rich experience in peaceful uses of nuclear technology provides a knowledge base that is well recognized by the IAEA and the US Department of Energy/National Nuclear security Administration; a knowledge base that had served as a source of information, motivation and support for African Member States that are yet to accede to the safeguards agreement. This paper provides a historical perspective to Ghana's experience, capacities, and lessons learned from the inception of its nuclear program, through its accession to, and implementation of, various international nuclear agreements, to the administration of safeguards.

Topics

SGI4

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Session Classification: [SGI] Establishing and Strengthening State and Regional Systems

Track Classification: Shaping the future of safeguards implementation (SGI)