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International Cooperation to Advance Global Nuclear Forensics Capabilities

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The Confidence Building Measures (CBM) program of the National Nuclear Security Administration advances a global security system in which authorities are able to use technical nuclear forensics to prevent, identify, and deter nuclear security breaches. In coordination with the US interagency and international partners, CBM leverages U.S. national laboratory nuclear forensics expertise to build international forensics capacity. CBM works to build a global security regime in which nuclear forensics provides critical capabilities that assist governments in identifying the source of illicit material and preventing future security breaches. CBM assists states in each of these areas through direct capacity building activities. To produce the most immediate increase in the confidence of foreign forensics capabilities, CBM focuses its exchange activities on states that: possess adequate laboratory infrastructure; are willing to cooperate on forensics projects; and are the most important to the regime because of the size of their nuclear materials holdings or their importance as international leaders. At the global level the CBM program works closely with the IAEA to provide training and support to IAEA activities including the development of guidance documents, consultancies, workshops and coordinated research projects. At the regional level CBM cooperates with the JRC/ITU and ASEAN to develop forensics capacities and linkages within the ARF region. Working with individual partners the CBM program provides support to build capacity, develop National Nuclear Forensic Libraries, and conduct joint research. CBM has a small but important role in funding such basic R&D. CBM currently is focusing international attention on a single topic that is of wide international concern: uranium chronometry. CBM is working with its partners to increase precision and accuracy in uranium age dating to better identify the origins and process history of uranium found out of regulatory control. Focusing on the same topic maximizes the impact of INFC's investment, since the results of a single research project can be shared with several different countries.

This supports IAEA Conference Goals 4, 5, and 6.

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