

Establishing a nuclear security inspection programme in Morocco

The Kingdom of Morocco has been using, transporting and storing, for decades, radioactive sources in a variety of socioeconomic sectors, and different practices. It also had established a legal and regulatory framework for nuclear and radiological safety since 1971. However, security aspects were not addressed at that time.

The Kingdom of Morocco has been, like many countries, facing a real and increased terrorist threat since the 2003 Casablanca terrorist event. Subsequently, it became clear that nuclear and other radioactive material could be targeted through illegal transfer, unauthorized removal, theft and/or sabotage. Therefore, and since then, different authorities and organizations started working with the objective of enhancing the security of radioactive sources within Kingdom of Morocco.

In addition, to these operational improvement, the Kingdom of Morocco has enacted, in 2014, a new law addressing nuclear and radiological safety and security, and nuclear safeguards; and the creating a unique and independent regulatory body reporting to the Prime Minister: the Moroccan Agency for Nuclear and Radiological Safety and security (AMSSNuR). Dedicated regulations on security of cat 1, 2&3 radioactive sources during use, storage and transport have been, since then, prepared and submitted to the government for approval. Other regulations on physical protection of nuclear material and facilities have been also drafted and reviewed by IAEA experts. A variety of guides dedicated to operators, to help them implementing provisions of the legal and regulatory framework, have been or are being drafted.

In order to strengthen nuclear security at the national level for authorized activities and facilities, there are two main components: the licensing process and the regulatory inspection and enforcement process.

As most countries establishing or considering the establishment of a regulatory inspection programme for nuclear security for the first time, there is a need to learn from other States or International Organizations that have years of experience in the field. This could be done, inter-alia, through workshops and/or experts missions. However, to train inspectors, the best way would be their participation through internships or technical visits in field inspections in these countries as observers. For obvious reasons, in most cases it is not doable.

The paper presents and analyses the actions undertaken and the challenges faced by the regulatory body AMSSNuR in establishing a regulatory inspection programme taking into account the preparation of inspection and enforcement procedures as part of AMSSNuR's Integrated Managements System, guidance for inspectors and checklists as well as ensuring training and qualification of future nuclear security inspectors. This programme considers, in addition, the interface with safety and safeguards.

Gender

State

Morocco

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