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A Canadian Perspective on the IAEA's State-Level Concept

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The IAEA has been implementing a State-level approach in Canada since 2005, after Canada first attained the broader safeguards conclusion. The Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission (CNSC), the safeguards regulatory authority in Canada, has nine years of experience in implementing a State-level approach and is thus well-placed to offer thoughts on the IAEA's State-level Concept (SLC). The IAEA is currently in the process of applying the SLC across all Member States, an initiative fully supported by the CNSC as a natural evolution of the safeguards system in response to a 'no real growth' budget, a growing global nuclear industry, and recent cases of undeclared activities.

The IAEA's transition from checklist-based safeguards to the information- and analysis-based SLC stands to enhance the IAEA's ability to deliver effective, efficient, and non-discriminatory safeguards across all States. Under an SLC the IAEA will investigate all safeguards relevant information for all States, providing for more effective safeguards by addressing a weakness in the IAEA's past approach to safeguards. The SLC offers gains in efficiency as it allows for an increase or decrease in safeguards effort where warranted, an effect which has been strongly demonstrated in Canada, where annual IAEA in-field effort under the State-level approach has dropped by seventy percent, without compromising effectiveness. The SLC will, in the CNSC's opinion, enhance the IAEA's ability to implement safeguards in a non-discriminatory manner - allocation of effort to a Member State will be in response to the State-specific Factors relevant to that State as a whole, as opposed to dictated by inflexible, facility-driven Criteria. For these reasons Canada has and will continue to support the application of the SLC to all Member States.

Country or International Organization

Canada

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