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Cooperation in the Implementation of Safeguards at Fukushima Dai-ichi Site

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The accident at Fukushima Dai-ichi Nuclear Power Station caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami in March 2011 had a major impact on the safeguards situation at the site. JSGO, NMCC, TEPCO and JAEA are tackling the challenges posed by the accident jointly with the IAEA and in cooperation with the US Department of Energy (DOE).

From the day of the earthquake, JSGO and the IAEA have shared information on decommissioning activities and discussed how to deal with this difficult issue. In May 2012, the Fukushima Task Force was established. Its objective is to develop a holistic approach to safeguards implementation measures for the site, to monitor the re-establishment of safeguards, to facilitate discussion of relevant issues, and to consider possible approaches to longer-term safeguards challenges.

All the fuels in spent fuel ponds in Units 5 and 6 and Common Spent Fuel Storage have been successfully re-verified. Re-verification of fuels kept in spent fuel pond in Unit 4 is underway. A special arrangement called SNOS (Short Notice Operational Support Activities) has been introduced to confirm non-diversion of declared material at Fukushima Dai-ichi site. Based on extensive information exchange, proactive discussions on safeguards approaches are being held for near-term issues.

The damaged core material in Units 1-3 will pose extreme difficulties in longer-term. A special sub-group has been established under the task force to address the issues. Although lessons learned from past nuclear accidents resulting in damage of core material have some relevance, none of them can be directly applicable for Fukushima. Thus a foresighted and creative approach is needed. Close coordination with the IAEA and support from technically competent institutions in Japan and from abroad, such as DOE, are also essential to tackle the issues.

Country or International Organization

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