

## National Progress Report: Armenia

March 31, 2016

### **Enhancement efforts in Combating Illicit Trafficking of Nuclear and Radioactive Materials**

Seizures of nuclear and radiological materials out of regulatory control in the South Caucasus region highlight the need for enhanced cooperation to counter the smuggling of these materials. The threat posed to regional and global security by the potential smuggling of hazardous materials is best met through the joint efforts.

Armenia continuously works at multilateral and bilateral levels to enhance its capabilities in countering nuclear smuggling in a comprehensive manner. These include the information collection and sharing, analysis, as well as law enforcement, and the issues of technical preparedness.

Within the framework of the U.S.-Armenia Joint Action Plan, signed in July 2008, the representatives of the governments of Armenia and the United States held a review meeting in Yerevan in April 2014. The ways of further strengthening cooperation to counter smuggling of nuclear and radioactive materials have been discussed. The sides shared information on nuclear smuggling threats and trends, and discussed best practices in the areas of nuclear detection, nuclear forensics, law enforcement and other tools to prevent, detect and respond to incidents of nuclear smuggling. They reaffirmed their commitments to cooperate more closely to prevent terrorists and other criminals from acquiring nuclear materials at black market. In particular, the US-Armenia intergovernmental working group outlined the following:

- to build nuclear forensics capabilities,
- to continue development of Armenia's counter nuclear and radiological materials smuggling capabilities,
- to assist and support Armenia's law enforcement agencies in investigations and prosecution of criminals involved in illegal activities.

Following these arrangements, a group of US experts had a nuclear forensics coordination meeting with Armenian counterparts in October 2015 in Yerevan. They discussed the provision of nuclear forensic equipment (an alpha spectrometer) and introductory training, which provides a sustainable

capability for nuclear smuggling investigations. Currently the sides are discussing the establishment of a national nuclear forensics library which is enshrined in Nuclear Security Summit documents and IAEA Nuclear Security Series guidelines.

### **IAEA Nuclear Security Related Activities**

The Government of Armenia attaches great importance to the full implementation of relevant International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) instruments on nuclear security and safety. Much attention is paid to the physical protection of nuclear facilities and nuclear material[1]. In December 2014 a team of IAEA experts conducted a two-week International Physical Protection Advisory Service (IPPAS) mission in Armenia. The mission reviewed the country's nuclear security-related legislative and regulatory framework for nuclear and other radioactive material and associated facilities and activities, as well as security arrangements applied to the transport of radioactive sources. The team also reviewed physical protection systems at the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) and at three facilities where high activity sources are used or stored. The IPPAS team concluded that Armenia's nuclear security is robust and that important progress has been made in enhancing nuclear security since a previous IPPAS mission in 2003. The team also identified several good practices in the national nuclear security regime and at the visited facilities. At the same time, recommendations and suggestions were made for further improvements in nuclear security.

### **Nuclear Security-Related International Activities**

Armenia continues its involvement in activities of Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) and fully shares its key principles enshrined in the Statement of Principles. Armenian officials and experts actively participated at the GICNT meetings and workshops, in particular at the Plenary Meeting in Helsinki and the Nuclear Forensics working Group meeting in the United States respectively in June and October 2015. The Armenian side presented the progress in nuclear forensics and in investigation of radiological or nuclear material smuggling.

A National report on the activities in Combating Nuclear Terrorism, in accordance with UN GA resolution N69/39 requirements, was presented to UNODA in May 2015. The Report contains the information on Government activities in the area of non-proliferation and protection of potentially-dangerous materials from terrorists and other criminal groups.

## **Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI)**

Proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, their delivery systems and related materials pose a real threat to international peace and security. In this regard, the Proliferation Security Initiative remains an important tool of prevention.

Armenia brings its contribution to the activities and the events organized within the Initiative's framework. Armenia's officials actively participated in the PSI high and mid-level meetings held in Warsaw (May 2013) and subsequently in Washington D.C. (January 2016). In parallel, the Armenian experts have been actively engaged in the US EXBS and DTRA operational exercises and workshops, which have enabled them to improve their individual and collective interdiction capabilities.

## **Implementation of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1540**

With the assistance of experts of 1540 Committee and the OSCE Conflict Prevention Center, Armenia's National Action Plan for 2015-2020 was elaborated and eventually adopted on February 5, 2015 by the Government of Armenia. In March 2015 it was submitted to the 1540 Committee. This dyadic document takes stoke and outlines a series of concrete steps ranging from reviewing already implemented national measures to the coordination of ongoing and anticipated activities. It underlines Armenia's activities and law regulations in nuclear, chemical and biological spheres as well as the export control and border security subjects. Particular attention is paid to multilateral and bilateral cooperation.

## **CBRN activities**

Alongside with above mentioned initiatives and programs Armenia is dynamically involved in the EU-led CBRN (chemical, biological, radioactive and nuclear) regional projects. In particular, with the assistance of the EU Centres of Excellence Armenia is currently implementing the projects N44 and N52 which are designed to develop national capabilities in risk mapping, risk assessment and mitigation, and the technical assistance to the National Team for their execution. The results of these practical arrangements will bring to the development of the National Action Plan.

## **Combating Proliferation Financing**

Armenian government is taking a number of significant steps to address the issues that might be conducive to proliferation related illegal activities. The governmental agencies involved in licensing and export control of dual-use items and sensitive material are well attuned to the risks. Meanwhile, close cooperation, including information sharing, has been established between these agencies and the country's financial intelligence unit (Financial Monitoring Centre)[2], which, within the framework of combating money laundering, terrorism and proliferation financing, is scrutinizing on a daily basis the UN SC lists of designated entities involved in proliferation financing. At the same time FMC has been proactive in equipping the financial institutions with software which ought to ensure that matches are made with names on PF lists.

On January 28, 2016 the Council of Europe MONEYVAL Committee published the 5th round mutual evaluation report of anti-money laundering and counter terrorism financing measures of Armenia adopted in December 2015. The Report concluded that Armenia demonstrated substantial level of effectiveness for the issues related to proliferation financing (*Immediate outcome 11*).

[1] In 2013 the Parliament of Armenia ratified the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material. Adoption of the Government Decree №985-A as of 13.09.2013 on appointment of competent authorities for implementation of obligations set in the Amendment to the Convention followed.

[2] A separate unit in the structure of the Central Bank of Armenia