

National Progress Report: Gabon

March 31, 2016

Since the 2014 Nuclear Security Summit, Gabon has strengthened its nuclear security implementation and built up the national nuclear security infrastructure with the adoption of the law n°17 /2013 of **21 august 2013 portant organisation du régime de la sûreté et de la sécurité radiologiques et nucléaires et des garanties**, which established l'Agence Gabonaise de Sûreté et de Sécurité Nucléaires (AGSSN) (Gabonese Nuclear Safety and Security Agency), regulatory authority for radiation protection, nuclear safety and security.

Strengthening Nuclear and Other Radioactive Material Security

The AGSSN is responsible, among others, to set the rules of physical protection of nuclear materials and radioactive sources; but above all to establish and implement the National System of Control and Accounting of Nuclear Materials.

The draft decree **fixant les principes généraux de sécurité (for establishing the general security principles)**, developed on the basis of the document N°13 of the collection Nuclear Security of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has already been examined by experts of the Office of Legal Affairs of IAEA, but it could not be submitted for adoption by the Council of Ministers because of the enormous delay in the effective establishment of the AGSSN.

However, high level staff of the National Police, Customs, GABON's National Security Council and the AGSSN participated in a number of training courses and events organized by the IAEA:

- **International Seminar on Essential Elements Nuclear Security**, in Argonne, Illinois, USA, 9 to 20 June, 2014;
- Meeting on **Benefits of joining the IAEA's Incident and Trafficking database (ITDB) Program**, in Vienna, from 25 to 26 November 2014,
- Regional Training Course on **Nuclear Security Detection Architecture** in Rabat, Morocco, 2 to 6 March 2015;
- International Training Course on **Developing a Defense in Depth Approach for the Detection of Transboundary Movement of Nuclear and Radioactive Material out of Regulatory Control**, in Athens, Greece, 7 to 10 July 2015;

- International Training Course **on Security in the Transport of Nuclear and Other Radioactive Material**, in Tokai, Japan, 16 to 20 November 2015).

Gabon is in the process of organizing in the coming months a national workshop on domestic threats related to radioactive sources.

In this sense, Articles 50 and 51 of Law No 17/2013 provide: "The development, implementation, evaluation and review of the threat by the competent services of the Ministry of Interior, in coordination with the ministries of Energy, National Defence, Foreign Affairs and AGSSN."

Minimizing Nuclear and other Radioactive Materials

Establishment of a regulatory body whose regulatory functions will be truly independent of other functions related to radioactive sources, such as management or promotion of their use. **The AGSSN is an independent administrative authority.**

This regulatory body created by Law n°17 /2013 is empowered, to develop regulations, to issue guidelines regarding the safety and security of radioactive sources and to issue licenses for the management of sources radioactive, among others.

There is an effective regulatory control of exploration, operating and rehabilitation sites of radioactive minerals.

The return to the supplier of all spent radioactive sources is the rule. It is planned, *the establishment of a service for searching missing radioactive sources and securing found radioactive sources.*

Countering Nuclear Smuggling

A new Memorandum of Understanding is being established with Customs services to control the import and export of radioactive sources.

To date, Gabon is yet to benefit from the assistance of the United States despite the pledge made by the US to accelerate the strengthening of national and international capacities to stop nuclear crime, seize illicit nuclear materials, and effectively prosecute any offenders.

Gabon was not able to participate in the workshop on nuclear forensics organized by the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT).

Gabon has not been invited to participate in virtual exercises (Snake Galaxy in 2014, and Snake Galaxy 2.0. 2015) on the development and use of the National Nuclear Forensic Libraries.

Supporting Multilateral Instruments

Gabon intends to ratify and put in place the following international legal instruments related to nuclear security

- *International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings (Terrorist Bombings Convention)*
- *Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism (Nuclear Terrorism Convention)*
- *The Convention for the Suppression of unlawful Acts against the Security of Maritime Navigation (SUA Convention of 1988)*
- *Protocol for the Suppression of Unlawful Acts against the Security of Fixed Platforms Located on the Continental Shelf (1988 Protocol on fixed platforms)*
- *The 2005 Protocol to the 1988 SUA Convention*
- *The 2005 Protocol to the 1988 Protocol relating to fixed platforms*

Gabon will strive to meet its obligations included in the UN Security Council Resolution 1540 and Resolution 1373, under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Collaborating with International Organizations

Through the Country Programme Framework jointly signed by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Government of Gabon, Gabon enjoys a multifaceted technical assistance

from this organization, even if the number of national projects presented by the country is still very limited.

The Office of Nuclear Security of the IAEA's Department of Safety and Security Nuclear has also offered assistance in Gabon during the CAN 2012 (securing strategic points).

Partnering with External Stakeholders

A partnership was established with the National Nuclear Security Administration of the U.S Department of Energy/Global Threat Reduction Initiative (GTRI),

The European Commission and the UN Interregional Institute for Research of Crimes and Justice (UNICRI) have initiated the creation of NRBC Centres of Excellence worldwide. The Focal Point of Gabon is the former Secretary General of the Ministry of Interior who has worked to establish National Teams. An Action Plan was developed and exercises with training of personnel of the Body of the fire brigade and Urgent Medical Aid Service (SAMU) has been made.