

National Statement – Australia

GICNT Plenary 1-2 June 2017

Australia thanks Japan for hosting these important meetings on the GICNT calendar, and thanks the US and Russian Federation as co-chairs, and the Netherlands as the IAG chair.

Australia joins in the chorus of condolences to the people and government of Afghanistan and other victims of the terrible terrorist attack in Kabul.

Colleagues, Australia remains a strong supporter and participant of these important collaborative initiatives in combating nuclear terrorism.

The outgoing Chair of the Nuclear Forensics Working Group, Ms Tegan Bull, deeply regrets she was unable to attend, and finish her tenure at this meeting. Ms Bull has asked that I pass on a few brief sentiments from her time as Chair.

Tegan Bull passes on her appreciation to the Co-chairs, IAG Coordinator and fellow working group chairs; and her gratitude to you, the Initiative partners, for the commitment you've demonstrated through active engagement and hosting of activities. Thank you all from Tegan, it has been a privilege.

Australia commends Tegan Bull for her leadership and service to the Working Group. We also acknowledge the long-term contributions of the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation. Australia stepping down from the chair position is no reflection of our strong commitment, and ANSTO will continue to make significant contributions, including working with the new Nuclear Forensics Working Group Chair, to ensure a smooth transition and continuity of its important Work Plan.

Looking forward, we are seeking to work with regional partners on a Nuclear Forensics activity in the South-East Asian region in the next 12 months.

Last year, Australia hosted GICNT exercise *Kangaroo Harbour*, a fictitious scenario of an unfolding nuclear terrorist threat. The workshop sought to highlight best practices for international engagement, notifications and assistance requests, including drawing on the important roles of the IAEA and INTERPOL.

Encouraged by the success of *Kangaroo Harbour*, we held a shorter, national, exercise, adapted into an Australian context, involving national agencies only. There were important observations from this exercise, which we'd be happy to share.

In closing, I extend Australia's great appreciation to Ambassador Nederlof; not only for your service to the Global Initiative, Ambassador, but also for your years of devotion to the nuclear security and nuclear non-proliferation agenda.

Thank you.