



UNSCLEAR

United Nations Scientific Committee
on the Effects of Atomic Radiation

Newsletter



Evaluating Science for Informed Decision Making

Mandate and vision

The United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) was established by the General Assembly on 3 December 1955 to undertake broad assessments of the sources of exposure to ionizing radiation and the effects on human health and the environment.

The Committee collects and analyses the latest scientific information,

and reports on the scientific basis that underpins radiation protection at national and international levels. The vision is to maintain and enhance credible, independent and up-to-date evaluations and remain an authoritative United Nations source of information for policymakers, regulators, licensees, the research community and other stakeholders worldwide.

Message from the Chair

Significant progress of work

Welcome to the first edition of the UNSCEAR Newsletter. Having now completed my first six months as Chair of the Committee, and after our productive and positive sixty-sixth session in June 2019, it is with cautious optimism that I look to the future. Since our session, the Bureau has met six times and the secretariat and expert groups have been very busy in progressing our programme of work.

With regard to our sixty-sixth session, I had the honour of presenting the Committee's Report to the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly in New York in October 2019. The presentation was well received, and with the support of the Australian Missions in both Vienna and New York, consultations on the draft UNSCEAR resolution went smoothly and it was approved by the Fourth Committee

for presentation to the General Assembly in December.

I would also like to thank Susana Habersack for her tireless dedication, hard work, unflagging energy, optimism and support to UNSCEAR for over 30 years. The Committee and I wish her the very best for her retirement, which I hope, will still see some involvement with the Committee's work.

Finally, I extend my thanks to members of the Bureau, staff of the secretariat, and all the expert groups and delegations of the Committee for their hard work and commitment in progressing the Committee's work.

Wishing you a very happy, healthy and prosperous 2020.



Gillian Hirth
Chair, UNSCEAR

Message from the Secretary

Focus on maintaining high quality

It has been an honour for me to join and lead the UNSCEAR Secretariat since April 2019. The Secretariat team remains as always committed to providing the necessary support to the Committee to continue its highly valued work and to enhance its independent and authoritative evaluations on the sources and effects of exposure to ionizing radiation. This is in the interest of radiation safety worldwide for the benefit of current and future generations.

In the future we will also put emphasis on further disseminating the identified needs for future research and promoting the work and findings of the Committee to Member States, policy and decision makers, regulators, licensees, the public and other relevant organizations. As Secretary to the Committee, I will focus on maintaining high quality and efficiency in our extremely committed Secretariat to support the

Committee, and implementation of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.

We will also increase outreach and transfer of knowledge activities to young scientists worldwide.

I would also like to take the opportunity to wish our colleague Susana Habersack all the best for her retirement after exceptionally long service to the United Nations and the Committee. Her warmth, sincerity and dedication will be missed.

This newsletter is only one of our initiatives to implement the new outreach strategy for 2020-2024 as adopted by the Committee at its sixty-sixth session.

It will inform on the work of the Committee and key activities of the Secretariat. I do hope you find it useful and would welcome feedback and suggestions for this new initiative.



*Borislava Batandjieva-Metcalf
Secretary, UNSCEAR*

Sixty-sixth annual session,
attended by 148 participants
from 25 member States,
8 international organizations and
4 observer countries.

Highlights from the sixty-sixth UNSCEAR session (10-14 June 2019, Vienna)



The Committee elected a new Bureau (for the sixty-sixth and sixty-seventh sessions).

The Committee approved two documents as scientific annexes for publication: Evaluations of Selected Health Effects and the Inference of Risk due to Radiation Exposure; and Lung Cancer from Exposure to Radon.

It discussed four documents intended to be approved at the Committee's sixty-seventh session and to be published as scientific annexes to the UNSCEAR 2020 Report:

- Evaluation of Medical Exposure to Ionizing Radiation
- Evaluation of Occupational Exposure to Ionizing Radiation
- Biological Mechanisms Relevant for the Inference of Cancer Risks from Low-dose Radiation
- Levels and Effects of Radiation Exposure due to the Accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station: Implications of Information Published since the 2013 UNSCEAR Report.

The Committee adopted a new strategy on public information and outreach activities, for the 2020-2024 period. It also established a new ad hoc working group on sources and exposure.

In addition, the Secretariat established two expert groups for two new projects endorsed by the Bureau:

- Second Primary Cancer after Radiotherapy
- Epidemiological Studies of Radiation and Cancer.

A new public exposure expert group was established in 2019, to carry out the new evaluation of natural and man-made sources of public exposure. A survey is to be launched in the third quarter of 2020 on public exposure.

Members of the UNSCEAR Bureau from left to right:
Mr. Ferid Shannoun, Scientific Officer, UNSCEAR; Mr. Ingemar Lund (Sweden), Rapporteur; Ms. Jing Chen (Canada), Vice-Chair; Ms. Gillian Hirth (Australia), Chair; Ms. Anna Friedl (Germany) and Ms. Jin Kyung Lee (Republic of Korea), Vice-Chairs; Mr. Hans Vanmarcke (Belgium), former Chair; Ms. Borislava Batandjieva-Metcalf, Secretary, UNSCEAR.





From left to right: Ms. Borislava Batandjeva-Metcalf, Secretary UNSCEAR; Ms. Gillian Hirth, Chair UNSCEAR (Australia); H.E. Mr. Mohammed Hussein Bahr Aluloom, Chair Fourth Committee (Iraq); Ms. Sangeeta Sharma, Secretary Fourth Committee.

Highlights from the presentation to the General Assembly (24 October 2019, New York)

The Chair, Gillian Hirth presented the [Report \(A/74/46\)](#) of the sixty-sixth UNSCEAR session to the Fourth Committee of the General Assembly in New York. She highlighted the mandate and scope of work of the Committee, noting that it carefully makes a distinction between objective science, which is within the scope of its work, from more subjective protection and policy matters, which is not.

She presented the main findings of the two scientific annexes approved at the sixty-sixth session, and also briefed on future plans and administrative issues. The Chair urged the General Assembly to encourage voluntary financial contributions that

could be assured and sustainable and lead to sufficient funding for UNSCEAR.

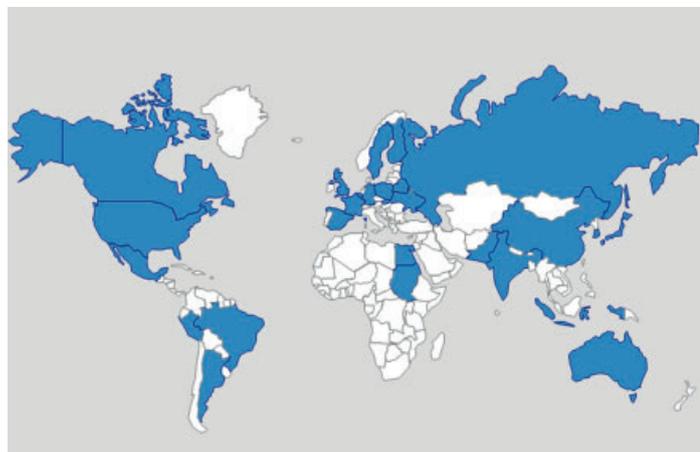
Delegates attending the presentation also reiterated their support and appreciation of the work of the Committee, and its contribution to increasing and harmonizing knowledge on the effects of exposure to ionizing radiation.

The draft resolution “Effects of Atomic Radiation” ([A/RES/74/81](#)) was passed by the Fourth Committee.

A [press release](#) covering the proceedings and a [video recording](#) are available publicly.

Current States Members of UNSCEAR

The Committee consists today of scientists from 27 States Members while in 1955 it started with 15.



The boundaries shown on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.



Participants and panellists at the UNSCEAR briefing to Representatives of Permanent Missions accredited to the United Nations (Vienna), held at the VIC on 9 December, 2019.

Did you know?

- Australia is chairing the sixty-sixth and sixty-seventh UNSCEAR sessions for the sixth time.
- The first UNSCEAR Chair was Mr C. E. Eddy from Australia (1956).
- For the first time, the Committee appointed a Bureau with majority representation of female experts – the Chair and three Vice Chairs; the first female Secretary of the Committee was also appointed in 2019.

Flash forward

Workshop on Data Collection for Medical, Occupational, Public Exposure (IRPA 15) https://www.irpa2020.org/program/program_09_5.html?sMenu=pro1	11-15 May 2020, Seoul
Sixty-seventh UNSCEAR session https://www.unscear.org/unscear/en/about_us/sessions.html	13-17 July 2020, Vienna
UNSCEAR National Contact Persons meeting (in cooperation with the IAEA) https://www.iaea.org/events/international-conference-on-radiation-safety-2020	Nov 2020, Vienna

Flashback to key events

Attendance at the twentieth IACRS Regular Meeting	1-3 July 2019, Geneva
Outreach at the sixty-third IAEA General Conference	16-20 September 2019, Vienna
Participation in the seventh annual meeting of Senior Representatives of Organizations in Formal Relations with ICRP	17 September 2019, Paris
Participation in the ninth International Symposium on Naturally Occurring Radioactive Material	23-27 September 2019, Denver
Participation in the IAEA Technical Meeting on the Implications of the Radon Dose Conversion Factors	1-4 October 2019, Vienna
Second Meeting of UNSCEAR Biological Mechanisms Study convened	2-4 October 2019, Vienna
Participation in article 31 Working Party meeting on Exposure to Natural Sources of Ionizing radiation	10-11 October 2019, Luxembourg
UNSCEAR-IAEA meeting on Radioactive Discharges in Atmospheric and Aquatic Environment	15-16 October 2019, Vienna
Second UNSCEAR Task Group meeting on Fukushima Follow-Up Project II (FFUP-II) convened	28-31 October 2019, Vienna
UNSCEAR Experts Group Meeting on Occupational Exposure Study	28-31 October 2019, Vienna
UNSCEAR Expert Group meeting on Epidemiological Studies of Radiation and Cancer convened	3-5 December 2019, Rockville
Information Briefing to UN-accredited Permanent Missions in Vienna	9 December 2019, Vienna
Courtesy Visit of the Secretary of UNSCEAR to Japan	16-20 December 2019, Japan

The commitment of UNSCEAR to the Sustainable Development Goals

In developing its strategic directions, UNSCEAR contributes to the achievement of four Sustainable Development Goals, i.e. Goal 3 (Good Health and Well-being), Goal 14 (Life below Water), Goal 15 (Life on Land) and Goal 17 (Partnerships for the Goals).

<https://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment/sustainable-development-goals/>

