Report on ENYGF 2017 (III)

The European Nuclear Young Generation Forum 2017 (ENYGF2017), a prestigious biennial nuclear event dedicated to the young generation of professionals and organized by the Young Generation Network (UK) in collaboration with ENS-YGN and the Nuclear Institute (UK) took place between June, 11-16 at Victoria Warehouse in Manchester, United Kingdom.

This year the topic of the event was “Innovation in nuclear: a rich heritage and our bright future” providing an exciting opportunity for the young generation for networking and information exchange, and a platform for various nuclear stakeholders to meet and interact.

The programme was very rich and exemplary organized, including plenary sessions, poster sessions, dedicated workshops and exhibitions, contests, technical visits and cultural events.

The technical visits were organized at various nuclear sites and facilities from United Kingdom aiming to provide an integrated perspective on the nuclear fuel cycle.

A great amount of the lectures in the plenary sessions were dedicated to presenting the UK nuclear program, with a focus on innovative aspects such as small modular reactors.

Presentations from representatives of international organizations like IAEA and NEA / OECD were also included in the programme. The NEA / OECD representative presented a new initiative called Nuclear tion 2050 to support researchers, the nuclear industry, regulatory organizations, radioactive waste nagement organizations and governments in the Member States to multiply their efforts in finding

ways to implement innovations in critical areas of nuclear energy technology, such as the disposal of radioactive waste and the development of new generations of reactors. The Nuclear Innovation Initiative 2050 aims to reactivate the interaction and collaboration of all stakeholders for the sustainability of the nuclear field.

The European Commission representative presented the sustained efforts of Euratom over time to facilitate collaborative nuclear research and innovative activities. Special emphasis was put on the future education and training of the next generation in the nuclear field, as well as on the transfer of knowledge and knowledge management.

The technical sessions consisted of scientific presentations on the following topics: new reactor constructions, advanced nuclear technologies, human resources and nuclear education, nuclear materials and technologies, nuclear waste disposal and management.

The workshops led by the representatives of the young generation in the nuclear field represented excellent opportunities for debates and exchanges on topics such as: advanced technologies for decommissioning, fundamental aspects of leadership, public consultation and involvement in decision-making processes, issues related to development of innovative projects, nuclear safety culture, an interactive approach to nuclear safety analysis, industry transformation for 21st century requirements, uncertainties and risks associated with innovative projects, multinational approaches to storage and disposal of radioactive waste, nuclear fuel cycle for a sustainable future of nuclear energy, and debate on the European energy mix.

During the event, I organized the workshop entitled “Looking at multinational approaches at the back-end of the fuel cycle”. The workshop proposed to address the opportunities, threats, strengths and weaknesses (SWOT) points in an international context when, for certain reasons, a proposal to host a regional spent fuel repository emerges from a certain country. Both the host and customer countries perspectives were addressed. The workshop also included two invited presentations: one entitled “*An overview of past and present initiatives on multinational storage and disposal*” provided by Dr Charles McCombie representing the ARIUS Association and the ERDO Working Group and the other one entitled “South Australia: The World’s Nuclear State? – Outcomes from Domestic Engagement and Opportunities and Risks for the International Nuclear Industry” and provided by Ms Massey de los Reyes from Harocon.

The workshop participants discussed the pros and cons of a country’s proposal to host an international repository for spent fuel, taking into account economic, political, social, technological factors, infrastructure, security and, last but not least, the ethical nature of such a proposal.

All the participants declared they enjoyed very much the workshop and the information received, as well as their engagement in discussions and their gained perspective on the complexity of multinational approaches for the back-end of the fuel cycle.

Also, during ENYGF2017, parallel meetings took place, like the European Nuclear Society (ENS) General Assembly meeting and the ENS-YG Core Committee Meeting, where I participated as the president of the Romanian Young Generation Network. In the ENS-YG Core Committee Meeting, I presented the country report and our actions proposed until end of 2017.

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