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MEASURES TO ADDRESS THE YEAR 2000 (Y2K) ISSUE

THE AGENCY'S EMERGENCY RESPONSE CENTRE

1. Document GC(43)/7 contains a section (paragraphs 33-35) on the Agency's Emergency Preparedness and Response Unit, which - inter alia - operates an Emergency Response Centre. This paper provides Member States with information regarding the operation of the Emergency Response Centre in the Y2K context.
2. The Emergency Response Centre is the focal point within the Secretariat for fulfilling the Agency's obligations arising out of the Convention on the Early Notification of a Nuclear Accident (the Early Notification Convention) and the Convention on Assistance in the case of a Nuclear Accident or Radiological Emergency (the Assistance Convention). It operates on the basis of an Emergency Response Plan setting out the arrangements for - inter alia - meeting those obligations.
3. Because of the possibility that Y2K problems will trigger the Agency's response arrangements, the Emergency Response Centre will, at the end of December 1999, be in a state of increased readiness for the millennium change. It will be ready to answer questions, quickly follow up any reports about Y2K-related incidents at nuclear facilities and provide verified information about any such incidents to all Member States of the Agency regardless of whether they are parties to the Early Notification Convention and/or the Assistance Convention and to all other States and all international organizations that are parties to one or other of the two Conventions.

<p>For reasons of economy, this document has been printed in a limited number. Delegates are kindly requested to bring their copies of documents to meetings.</p>

4. The Emergency Response Centre will be in a state of increased readiness during the crucial period 31 December 1999-1 January 2000 - from 06:30 hours UTC¹ (07:30 hours local Vienna time) on 31 December 1999 to 12:30 hours UTC (13:30 hours local Vienna time) on 1 January 2000 (a period of 30 hours). The contact numbers in Vienna for the period **from 06:30 hours UTC on 31 December 1999 to 12:30 hours UTC on 1 January 2000** will be:

Facsimile: +43 1 2600 7 29309 **Telephone:** +43 1 2600 22026
+43 1 2600 22025
+43 1 2600 22028
E-mail: eru1@iaea.org

These will be in addition to the following normal (24 hours/day) emergency numbers:

Facsimile: +43 1 2600 7 29000 **Telephone:** +43 1 2632000 or +43 1 2632012

5. One hour after each time zone goes through 24:00 hours local time during the night from 31 December 1999 to 1 January 2000, the Centre will try to communicate via telephone and facsimile with States operating nuclear power plants through the national contact points established by them pursuant to the Early Notification Convention. The communications links between the Emergency Response Centre and the national contact points of all States operating nuclear power plants will undergo special testing before the end of November 1999.

6. During the period 31 December-1 January 2000, the reliability of communications to and from the Agency's Headquarters in Vienna, where the Emergency Response Centre is located, will be critical. The Secretariat trusts that all States concerned will take all reasonable steps to ensure the reliability of their telecommunications systems during that period.

7. The Secretariat requests the governments of States parties to the Early Notification Convention and/or the Assistance Convention to ensure that each national contact point established pursuant to the Early Notification Convention: informs its national Y2K co-ordinator that it is the contact point for the Emergency Response Centre; and arranges for its communications system to be fully operative during the period 31 December 1999-1 January 2000.

¹ UTC - Universal Time Co-ordinated (= Greenwich Mean Time).