IAEA International Atomic Energy Agency

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Advancing Education About Nuclear Law and Science in Arab Countries

Tuesday 3 November 2015 15:00 CET

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Participants at the Arab-European Summer School on Energy Education held recently at the Vienna University of Technology Atominstitut, Vienna, Austria. (Photo: AESSEE)

School teachers from eight Arab countries are now better equipped to train their students on the legal aspects of nuclear science and technology thanks to the IAEA's participation in the Arab-European Summer School on Energy Education (AESSEE), held in Vienna last week.

The participants – secondary school teachers and young scientists from Algeria, Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Oman, Saudi Arabia and Tunisia – can now use the knowledge acquired to better prepare and support their students in pursuing higher education and careers in the field of nuclear energy as well as other related sectors.

More than 25 000 students will benefit overall.

Peri Lynne Johnson, IAEA Legal Adviser and Director of the IAEA's Office of Legal Affairs, provided participants with an overview of the IAEA's role in developing an international legal framework for the safe, secure and peaceful uses of nuclear science and applications.

"Since its inception, the IAEA has been assisting our Member States in establishing comprehensive national nuclear legal frameworks," Johnson said in her talk entitled 'The

International Nuclear Legal Framework and the IAEA'.

Johnson also covered recent developments in the global legal framework, including the adoption earlier this year of the Vienna Declaration on Nuclear Safety (https://www.iaea.org/sites/default/files/cns_viennadeclaration090215.pdf), the entry into force of the Convention on Supplementary Compensation for Nuclear Damage (CSC) (https://www.iaea.org/publications/documents/treaties/convention-supplementary-compensation-nuclear-damage), and the pending entry into force of the Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material (CPPNM) (https://www.iaea.org/About/Policy/GC/GC49/Documents/gc49inf-6.pdf).

The adoption of the Amendment to the CPPNM, as IAEA Director General Yukiya Amano has stated in various occasions, can be the single most important step which the international community can take to strengthen nuclear security globally, Johnson said.

She also highlighted the IAEA's contribution to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (https://www.iaea.org/newscenter/news/how-iaea-will-contribute-sustainable-development-goals) in a number of areas, such as human health, food, and water management.

"The introduction of this complex topic by the IAEA Legal Adviser in a very simple and exciting way has motivated the participants to act as ambassadors of a non-proliferation culture in their societies and schools and to be more active in spreading this knowledge," said Professor Saleh Ismail, Chairman of the AESSEE in his concluding remarks.

Information strengthens knowledge

The AESSEE aims to assist Arabic-speaking countries in strengthening their education by focusing on teachers. The school, held at the Vienna University of Technology Atominstitut from 19 to 31 October, was organized in cooperation with the OPEC Fund for International Development (OFID) and the League of Arab States.

This year's course covered a diverse range of subjects, including the economics of energy sources, solar energy and energy storage. A significant component of the programme was devoted to nuclear applications and technology.

The IAEA views education as a critical link in capacity building. It facilitates effective collaboration among governments, education, and industry, ensuring that capabilities necessary for the safe, secure and successful applications of nuclear technology are sustained.

Last update: 3 November 2015

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