International Atomic Energy Agency

Italy

Represented by: Rachel Tran (Lorne Park Secondary School)

**Topic 1: Addressing the Threat of Nuclear Terrorism**

Following recent threats from the Islamic State (ISIS) to conquer Rome, the local Italian police force decided to increase its security around popular tourist locations such as the Coliseum and the Vatican museums; it is because of Rome’s tourist popularity that it is extremely vulnerable to a terrorist attack (Bayliss, 2016). Moreover, there have been attempts of terrorism in recent years. In 2015, two suspected terrorists were apprehended by Italian police after allegedly planning to attack a nuclear weapons base in Ghedi (Northern Italy). This base, in particular, houses 20 US B61 nuclear bombs, however, Italian police said at a press conference that the two conspirators referred to several targets, but the Ghedi military base in particular (Kristensen, 2015).

Nuclear terrorism has transformed over the years as it is becoming more and more accessible for any state or sub-states actor to produce and detonate a bomb. Even without the knowledge to create one’s own nuclear weapon, the nuclear black market is a growing industry, however, many lessons can be learned from the discretions that aid the black market, such as the under-reportage due to secrecy, lack of transparency, etc.

Since Italy’s ratification of the 2005 Amendment to the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials (CPPNM), it has become one of the most improved states. For future progress, however, there are changes that Italy could make such as strengthening its laws and regulations to alleviate insider threat to improve its nuclear materials security conditions, publishing an annual report on nuclear security, making public declarations and its materials quantities, and hosting an international peer review to improve nuclear materials security conditions. As such, on the topic of improvements, among the lowest of Italy’s indicators are its security and control measures (cybersecurity) and global norms (international assurances). Furthermore, the nuclear materials security conditions are continually affected by governance and the challenges of corruption.

As such, globalization has permanently altered the security landscape as strategies has been based on physical barriers. The IAEA has been actively encouraging for the cause of nuclear security, especially considering the events of September 2001 in New York City. International cooperation has become the most important component in the security efforts against terrorism of all sorts. Even with the understanding that nuclear security is a national responsibility, many countries lack the initiative to input the programs and the resources to properly combat the threat. With these countries in particular, international cooperation is emphasized as it is essential in strengthening their national capabilities and to the general effort of building strong networks for preventing all threats.

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**Topic 2: Nuclear Energy as Alternate Source of Energy**

Following the overwhelmingly negative results of the 2011 national referendum in Italy, the Italian population was shown to be very clearly against the return of nuclear power (the plan to generate 25% of Italy’s electricity from nuclear power by 2030 was rejected). A little over 50% of the population voted, however, 94.05% of these voters were against the construction of any more nuclear reactors. The results of the referendum could be in response to the Japanese nuclear disaster, Fukushima (Kennedy, 2011). As such, they have closed down all their nuclear plants in line with the new policy. Italy, although it is an innovator in the field of nuclear science, is now distinct for having rejected nuclear energy as a power source for a second time. Although this may be safer for the country itself, Italy’s economy has suffered greatly since its first referendum in 1987.

In 2013, Italy’s gross electricity generation was 288 billion kWh. Of this, in order of most used from source, was gas-fired generation, coal, hydro, solar and finally, wind. Its per capita electricity consumption in the prior year was 4900 kWh. To satisfy Italy’s energy needs, it relies very heavily on imports and is the world’s largest net importer of electricity, primarily from France and Switzerland.

As earlier mentioned, Italy’s economy has suffered major costs due to its reliance on oil and gas in place of nuclear energy. As a result, its energy costs are well above the European union average. In 2008, the price averaged 9 cents/kWh more for households than in France. Italian officials who work directly with nuclear energy and its position in Italy, in particular economic minister Claudio Scajola, have had reactions opposite to their people as the nuclear phase-out cost around €50 billion. Enel, Italy’s primary multinational provider of electricity production, plans to build 6400 MWe of net nuclear capacity with the help of France’s EDF.

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**Topic 3: Measures to Implement and Enforce the Nuclear Program in Iran**

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), signed between Iran and six other powers on 14 July 2015 was formally implemented six months later. As revealed by a document obtained by the Associated press, principal restrictions on Iran’s nuclear program will slowly be alleviated before the 15-year internationally negotiated deal expires. This poses a danger to the entire world as it advances Tehran’s ability to build, and possibly detonate, a bomb well before the end of the agreement. This document, however, is the only text with pertinence to last year’s deal on the subject that has not been made public to more than the United States members of Congress. The diplomat who shared this information described it as an integral add-on agreement to the nuclear contract, approved by Britain, China, France, Germany, Russia and the U.S. It is outlined that by 2027, only 11 years after the deal is implemented, Iran can begin replacing its “mainstay centrifuges with thousands of advanced machines (Jahn, 2014).

In accordance to the deal, Iran still holds the ability to enrich uranium, however, it is only for peaceful purposes. For 15 years, they are unable to refine metal to more than 3.7 percent enrichment, the level needed to fuel nuclear power plants. According to the United States, the nuclear agreement is in place to ensure that Iran would need at least one year to “break out” and make enough weapons grade uranium to construct at least one weapon, however, if the enrichment rate doubles (based on a comparison of outputs between the old and new machines), the breakout time would be reduced to six months. An official noted that On the anniversary of the agreement, President Barack Obama noted that the nuclear agreement has so far succeeded in “avoiding further conflict and making us safer.”

To ease the worry of nations unhappy with the deal, they can be assured that there is a significant increase in monitoring and transparency of Iranian nuclear energy and permanent restrictions implemented in the deal. Keeping the enrichment capability was very important to Iran, assumed to be for reasons of national pride. As such, to improve its reputation amongst the nations of the world, it would be integral for Iran to continually show that it is able to maintain an enrichment level lower than 3.7 percent even after the deal is over. Iran has consistently stated that it is not interested in nuclear energy and subsequently, weapons, and the pact is very closely monitored by the IAEA. The length of the agreement is the amount of time it is estimated by the United States for Iran to produce enough material for a bomb from a few months to a year. Arguably, it is fair that Middle East powers are skeptic of Iran’s potential growing aggression in response to the agreement, however, President Obama has said that the deal has prevented another Middle Eastern war and that it is very difficult to convince Iran to give up its enrichment abilities entirely (Tirone, 2013).

The JCPOA marked the removal of nuclear-related sanctions on Iran, there have been mixed reactions throughout the nation of Iran. In the latest attacks against the President Hassan Rouhani, critics have questioned whether or not Iran has been readmitted to the Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunication (SWIFT). As such, only several months after the implementation of JCPOA, Rouhani’s opponent have begun using SWIFT as a means to attack his government, despite the administrations persistence in that Iranian banks have been reconnected. Further, many of the members of parliament note that the JCPOA has given their “enemies” major incentives. As such, following the overwhelming criticism, the CBI invited a group of reports to visit the SWIFT department and observe the online transactions between the Iranian banks and the global financial messaging service. In the past year, many economic delegations have visited Iran and negotiated several deals, however, none have required the reconnection of SWIFT.

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