

# News from Women in Nuclear — IAEA Chapter



Special Issue WiN Global Annual Conference 2015

<http://www.winiaeachapter.org/>

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## Foreword

For the first time, WiN IAEA had the honour of organizing and hosting the WiN Global Annual Conference this year in Vienna. Organizing this event in cooperation with one of the leading agencies in the nuclear world, the IAEA, provided an invaluable opportunity for both WiN and the IAEA alike.

The overwhelming success of the Conference is proof that our organization is growing, and our mission is gaining traction and visibility worldwide.

It was wonderful to see the IAEA Headquarters filled with professional women from all over the world and to listen to their inspiring discussions. Many new bonds were established and existing bonds strengthened. I hope this special issue of the newsletter will be a source of warm memories for many of you, and an inspiration for us all.

With all my heart, I thank all of you for coming to Vienna and for making this possible. It could not have been done without you.

*Auf Wiedersehen in Abu Dhabi,*

Eva Gyane  
President WiN IAEA Chapter

# Conference Highlights

By Susan Cohen-Unger

This article is freely adapted from WiN Global Conference 2015 — a win-win WiN experience, S. Cohen-Unger, ECHO issue 254. The original version may be requested at [ECHO-subscribe@lists.iaea.org](mailto:ECHO-subscribe@lists.iaea.org)



The 23<sup>rd</sup> Women in Nuclear (WiN) Global Annual Conference — under the motto **Women in Nuclear Meet Atoms for Peace** — was a resounding success. The many stimulating presentations and discussions, the varied technical tours and the vibrant social events were infused with a spirit of camaraderie and the energy of women who are making a positive contribution to improving life in today's chaotic world.

The conference was organized in cooperation with the IAEA, which funded the participation of almost 50 women, mostly from developing countries. With over 470 participants from 62 countries registered for the event, we had the best attended WiN Global conference ever.

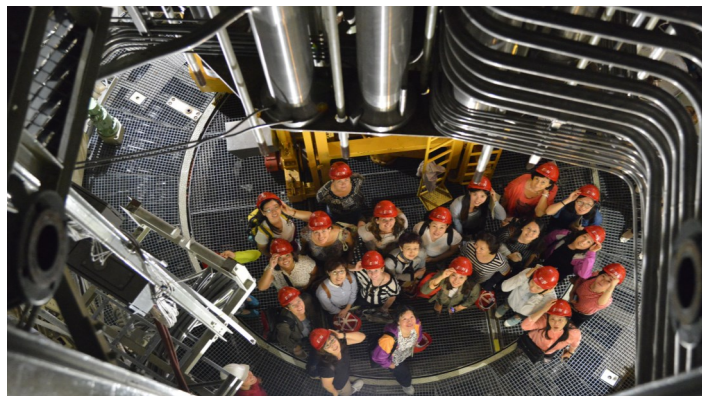
On 25 August — the opening day — before a word was spoken, the tone was set by the delightful strains of the *Blue Danube Waltz* accompanying WiN IAEA's President Eva Gyane's introductory slide. The conference was opened by Se-Moon Park, WiN Global President; Janice Dunn-Lee, IAEA Deputy Director General of Management; and Eva Gyane. During the WiN Global General Assembly, held that day, Se-Moon Park and Dominique Mouillot, outgoing WiN Europe President, presented the *WiN Declaration for the Earth Climate* — which highlighted the crucial role of nuclear energy in preserving the earth for future generations — for signature.

The conference programme, with its leitmotifs of *women, nuclear, and peace*, comprised plenary sessions — in the form of presentations, panels and discussions — covered the work of the IAEA; career development for women in the nuclear field, including communication; use of radiation in medicine; relevance of nuclear for energy, environment and climate change; nuclear safety, safeguards, security and non-proliferation.

## Technical visits: from the VIC to the forests of Bohemia

As well as the conference sessions, WiN IAEA organized some fascinating technical visits. Tours were arranged to IAEA facilities, such as the Incident & Emergency Centre (IEC), which serves as the Agency's focal point for responding to nuclear or radiological incidents and emergencies,

and the Seibersdorf Laboratories. There were tours to other nuclear facilities in and around Vienna, such as the TRIGA Mark II Reactor of the *Atominstitut* at the Technical University of Vienna, used for training, research and isotope production; and *Zwentendorf NPP* — the only reactor in the world which was completely built, but mothballed by a referendum before it was ever put into operation — now a museum and training centre. Also tours went further afield: there was a day trip to the unique *Atom Muzeum* near Prague, housed in a former Soviet facility for storing nuclear warheads during the Cold War and the only nuclear weapon storehouse to become a museum.



The Zwentendorf NPP offers unique training opportunities: <http://www.zwentendorf.com/englisch/trainingcenter.asp>  
Photo: AKW Zwentendorf

## Spectacular social events

The conference embraced our beautiful city of Vienna and its music during its lively, interesting social programme. On the evening before the conference began, we were treated to new wine and regional food specialties at a *Heuriger* nestling in the vineyards at the edge of the Vienna Woods. At the reception after the opening day, a Japanese delegate, Junko Ogawa, gave us a display of Japanese dancing — watched admiringly by the IAEA DG Yukiya Amano — and then an excellent quartet, the *Wiener Frauen Schrammeln*, played traditional music unique to Vienna.

The highlight was the Conference Gala Dinner held in the magnificent ballroom of the *Rathaus*, accompanied by a unique musical programme. During the evening, guests were entertained by one of Europe's top brass ensembles, the *Deutschmeister*, playing waltzes, polkas and marches, and by a group of dancers from the renowned *Elmayer* dancing school, which trains the debutantes for Vienna's grand balls.

## Finally . . .

On the closing day, after she'd given us a mouth-watering description of what awaited us at the next WiN Global conference, the WiN Global flag was transferred to Hasna Al Blooshi from the UAE, where the conference will be held in November 2016.



# In Front Line for Climate Change

By Gabi Voigt



A first-ever binding universal agreement on climate protection is the ultimate goal of the upcoming 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference. Nuclear energy is under consideration as a low-carbon energy option that may play a fundamental role in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and limiting global warming.

Our WiN Global Vice-President Dominique Mouillot brought the topic to the table of the WiN Executives in June 2015, ahead of the WiN General Assembly in Vienna. Dominique proposed making a statement on behalf of WiN Global on the advantages of nuclear energy as an environmentally friendly energy production. The statement pledged support for the [Nuclear for Climate](#) declaration signed in May 2015 by more than three dozen nuclear societies across the globe and stating the belief that nuclear energy, as low-carbon energy, was a key part of the solution to fight climate change. Alongside, a position paper of the European Nuclear Society Young Generation Network (ENS-YGN) on [Nuclear Energy and the Environment](#) was signed in Paris in June.



Photo: D. Calma/IAEA

funding mechanisms, as is the case for all other low-carbon energy sources".

The [Women in Nuclear Declaration for the Earth Climate](#) was signed by most of the WiN Conference participants. The final signed version of the declaration will be presented by Se-Moon and/or Dominique at the UN Climate Change Conference in Paris in December 2015, further spreading the reputation that our network can prove that women are proud to work in the nuclear field, especially during this very important year for the climate and our future.



With the approval of our WiN Global President Se-Moon Park, four WiNners (Dominique Mouillot, Irene Aegerter, Sophie Prevot and myself) were tasked with bringing this further. We had our first telephone conference on 20 July where we agreed on a draft to be produced by myself for the WiN Global General Assembly. After several revisions, this document was submitted for approval to WiN Global, WiN Europe Executives and Board Members before presenting the declaration to the General Assembly in Vienna, then duly signed by the WiN Global President and Vice-President for signature by those WiNners who felt comfortable doing so.

Acknowledging the rising global electricity demand and the need to ensure future supply for the next generations, the declaration requests that UN "recognize nuclear energy as a low-carbon energy option and include it in its climate

## News from Nuclear for Climate

- \* **Going social with the young generation for the NYC climate week!** IYNC is leading a social media campaign together with the Nuclear4Climate coms team as part of New York City Climate Week #CWNYC. [Click here](#) to find out how to can support the campaign. To kick off the social media campaign, IYNC has officially released a [letter of declaration](#) to all the participants of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Conference of the Parties 21 (CoP21).
- \* **Nuclear4climate presence at COP21!** The steering committee has made the final go for us to get a booth at the climate conference in Paris between 2-9 December on the Le Bourget site. Our booth, situated in the "Solutions Gallery" side, will be a "meet the experts" platform for you to organize meetings with journalists and delegates.
- \* **Contact our communication team** for any communication project as they can help you with logos, graphical guidelines, models for booths, videos, ideas for goodies: [bo-ris.lengoc@sfn.org](mailto:bo-ris.lengoc@sfn.org)

## WiN Global Award 2015

Elena Buglova



Elena Buglova was instrumental in leading the IAEA Incident Emergency Centre (IEC) in the aftermath of the Fukushima accident. During that time the IEC was operational 24/7 in order to provide assistance to the Member State and objective, up-to-date information on the accident to the international community. She represented the IEC during meetings and press conferences. She also participated in the drafting of the IAEA's report on the Fukushima accident.

Elena was the Vice-President of WiN IAEA 2010-2014 and supported the President in building up the Chapter after many years of inactivity. Elena was instrumental in preparing the WiN Global Annual Conference 2015, in particular the programme and all related tasks.

Elena is a role model of successful females in leading positions who combine work and family life. She has thereby motivated young women to pursue a scientific career without giving up their family obligations. The WiN IAEA Chapter members are convinced that she well deserves this distinguished award as an acknowledgement of her work for WiN and the role women in nuclear can play in an international organization.

Irene Aegerter

Irene Aegerter has dedicated her life to the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, in particular for electricity generation. She is a well-recognized technical expert and her nuclear expertise has been in high demand at many top events and fora. As a nuclear safety expert, she has been a proponent of upgrading ageing Swiss nuclear power plants to latest safety standards. She has successfully fought against the *Energiewende* in Switzerland, i.e. the elimination of nuclear power from the country's energy mix, by convincing people of the benefits of nuclear energy as a clean energy source.



Irene is the 'Mother of WiN Global' and she has been instrumental in turning the organization into what it is today. As a member of the Strategic Committee she strives to further enhance the operation of WiN Global in order to transform it into an even more professional organization.

Irene has the gift of recognizing talents and she is never tired of mentoring promising young people in achieving their goals. At the same time, Irene has remained a very humble person, respectful of her counterparts and supportive of anybody in need. She has been a generous sponsor of WiN-related activities.

This award is a recognition of Irene Aegerter's life's work for women and men in nuclear, in Switzerland and on the global level. Without Irene, WiN would not be what it is today!

## Best Poster Awards



**Wei Chen**, *Revolution of Nuclear Power Plant Design through Digital Technology*

**Oum Hakam**, *Nuclear Security Education in Morocco*

**Vanessa Maree**, *The Management of the Solid Radioactive Waste & Used (Spent) Fuel in South Africa: An Overview of Past, Present and Future Practices*

**Luong Pham**, *Surface Decontamination Studies of Cs-137 and Sr-85 Using Polymer Gel*

**Amparo Pineda Tovar**, *Behaviour of the Cardiovascular Diseases in Women*



# Reflections

By Luisa Milani

*A selective range from the dozens of interviews collected during the conference.*

## Julieta Sayan, WiN Argentina



The life of WiN Argentina has been quite difficult so far. The chapter was founded in 1992 but from 1998 to now, it entered a forced pause due to budget cuts for all nuclear scientific and technical activities in the country. However, finally in 2006 Argentina had a nuclear revival and now it is indeed a very good moment to restart our WiN chapter, as we have the responsibility of sustaining the new projects and helping the national nuclear programme to succeed. We had what it took to do it: we gathered a multidisciplinary group of more than 50 people in less than one year — we have lawyers, social scientists, project managers, mathematicians, physics and engineers. And, above all, our group is composed of both very enthusiastic young scientists and highly qualified specialists who are mentoring us. We really do have the best of all generations! What else to say: we are back, and we are literally full of energy!

## Jasmin Craufurd-Hill, WiN Australia

One of the great strengths of WiN has always been its role as a forum for information exchange and networking and this was very much the case with WiN Global Conference 2015, given both the high number of participants, including and TC-sponsored ones. It was fantastic to see new networks and friendships being formed that facilitated discussions (and will do, one hopes, in future), with the potential to help participants address challenges extending from the individual through to organizational and even industry-wide levels. These challenges could be communicating with media, safety and security culture or WiN specific challenges, such as starting a chapter or developing regional workshops.



## Margaret Mkhosi, WiN South Africa

I grew up in a rural area, under Apartheid. Despite all the difficulties, I was determined to study science as I wanted to know everything about the world. Nothing stopped me, and I was able to get a Bachelor of Science in Education and become a science teacher. Then, one day I had the chance of visiting the National Accelerator Centre in Capetown (now the iTHEMBA LABS) and I was utterly astonished. For the first time, I was seeing in real time something that I had only read about in my books. I could not take it off my mind, and I had the right motivation to apply for and win a PhD position in nuclear engineering in the USA. My personal experience taught me the importance of conceptualizing science and of being exposed to the practical application of what you are studying. Back home, I am going once a month to my old school to talk about nuclear science to the kids. I try to be a role model to them, to show them that it is possible, so that they can make it too! Also, I am assisting other African countries to set up WiN chapters, as it is usually not as easy as it is for us in South Africa. Sharing a continent, we have to assist each other.

## Heather Kleb, WiN Canada



To me it was remarkable to see how much the conference participants had in common, despite their representing over 60 different countries. I also found it noteworthy that — fired by the WiN mandate to increase the number of women in science, technology, engineering, and maths (STEM) related careers — we easily filled a room with over 400 women scientists, engineers and other nuclear professionals. So not only do we have a common perspective, we also have a common voice and the numbers to make those voices heard. And with this voice we can ensure that nuclear technologies have a place in the upcoming climate change discussions at COP21 in France this December.

### Annick Carnino, WiN France

I was one of the founding members of WiN and I am proud to attest that WiN has become such an impressive network with potential to still grow a lot. At the same time, with the expansion of the nuclear sector, the net is not sufficient and needs to progressively address more and more issues. I believe it is time for WiN to raise its profile, enhance its visibility and propose a more concrete strategy. For example, the *Nuclear for Climate* declaration is an excellent channel of action and will amplify our voice. We also need to establish structured programmes targeting the young generation and to find a way to transmit our experience. I am currently teaching at three different universities in France and can see how things have changed over the years. We were the pioneers, the first generation, and we had a world to discover. It was easier then, in some ways. This generation is facing very different challenges and we need to guide young people to find their place under the sun.



### Silvia Sanz Diaz, WiN Germany



Germany is shutting down its nuclear power plants. I am a Spanish project manager working in Germany and it is frustrating to experience the country's nuclear exit. However, the conference clearly showed that there are many countries in the world that have learnt to live with nuclear energy and have found smart energy solutions. I am confident that Germany can do the same — there are still high hopes for a green nuclear Germany. My colleagues from WiN Germany and I will bring back home the motivation we have found at the conference!

### Eleonora Pek, WiN Hungary

I always wanted to be an engineer, since I was a child. At the age of 16, I discovered nuclear technology and was amazed — I immediately thought that I could become a nuclear engineer but I did not have a clue about where to start! Against the will of my father, who wanted me to be an economist (apparently something more 'feminine'), I graduated as a mechanical engineer and got a job in an oil company. I discovered very soon that the fact that I was a woman was holding back my career. But I did not give up and, one blessed day, I was offered a post-graduate course in nuclear engineering: the dream of my life was finally coming true! After this course, I started working at the Paks Power Plant and moved by untiring curiosity, I got involved in so many projects that I soon became a key person. Result: my career finally took off and in two years I became a section head. My message to the young generation is never to give up and to believe in your dreams!



### Van Zyl De Villiers, IAEA



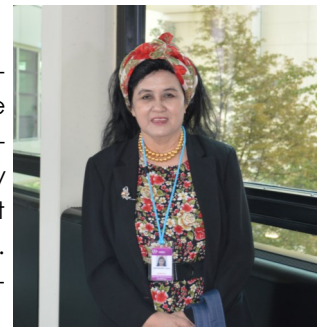
It was an honour to be invited to present the work of the Department of Safeguards at the WiN Global Conference. I saw a lot of excellent women in this room, and I do hope that the conference will incentivize these women to apply for our positions. I heard a lot of questions about inspector positions for women, and I can say that we have excellent active female inspectors. It is certainly not an easy job, but this should not prevent women from applying. I would really encourage qualified female applicants. Also, in the Department of Safeguards we have plenty of other opportunities that don't involve frequent travelling — information analysis jobs, for example. And not all positions require specialized safeguards experience: some of our entry level positions, for instance, require a science or engineering degree, some experience in the nuclear industry and an understanding of the nuclear sector. Once you're here at the IAEA, we provide training and opportunities to gain key work experience related to safeguards. So, again, I would encourage all of you to consider a career in safeguards, and take advantage of the many opportunities here at the IAEA.

**BK Sapra, India**

I could attend this conference thanks to a grant from the IAEA and I am very grateful for this opportunity. I loved the international and dynamic atmosphere I found at the IAEA and I have learnt a lot about the work opportunities there. I am a senior scientist at the Bhabha Atomic Research Centre in Mumbai, where I carry out my research on aerosol measurement techniques, often participating in international projects. I am proud to see how, in laboratory techniques, we female scientists are doing much better than our male counterparts! Nevertheless, women in science are not always in a great position — it is reinvigorating to attend the WiN Global Conference and get inspired! Indeed, it is time for action: with Meera Venkatesh from the IAEA and other Indian colleagues, I have been discussing the possibility of setting up a WiN India Chapter. We will take this further and next year we hope to have great news.

**Tri Murni Soedyartomo, WiN Indonesia**

My dream is to build nuclear power plants in Indonesia and see the country flourish. Indonesia is a beautiful country with a population of over 240 million people living in more than 17 000 islands. Currently, 30% of the Indonesian people still do not have access to electricity and — considering the huge annual increase of the population — the country urgently needs more electricity. Nuclear energy is the key to sustainable development in Indonesia: it can support the growth of industry and agriculture and substantially improve the quality of life. Nuclear can bring prosperity to my country and WiN Indonesia will continue to advocate a national nuclear programme.

**Melissa Crawford & Ekaterina Ryabikovskaya, IYNC**

**Melissa:** It is great to see that, for the first time, several youth nuclear organizations have female leadership — Ekaterina and I are leading the IYNC, Eileen Radde is at the helm of the EYG. The IYNC is in a phase of further development and we are promoting our next annual conference, which will take place in Hangzhou, China on 24–30 July 2016. Our main focus at the moment is on communication with stakeholders external to the nuclear sector: we are studying and developing strategies to address the misinformed public.

**Ekaterina:** It was the Fukushima accident that persuaded me to enter the nuclear sector. Being from Russia and having seen the consequences of the Chernobyl accident very well makes me very deeply understand the suffering of the Japanese people. A few years ago, I was attending a meeting at the IAEA and I met Elena Buglova, Director of the IAEA Incident and Emergency Centre and head of communication during the Fukushima crisis. I still remember her appearance and strength. I was so impressed, realizing that women can be very brave and bear a lot of weight on their shoulders. When they talk about role models — I guess I can say that Elena is the person that inspired me most to become the person I am today.

**Amparo Pineda Tovar, Mexico**

I am a nuclear medicine physician, specialized in nuclear cardiology. I participated in the conference with a poster on *The Behaviour of Cardiovascular Disease in Women* — and I won the poster competition! This conference was a priority for me, as it was a unique chance to share experience and exhibit my work. In fact, in Mexico it can be quite hard to gain visibility and acknowledgement of my research. Here in Vienna, I felt heeded and I had the opportunity to exchange and discuss ideas with many people from all over the world. I also had the chance to discover more about the work of the IAEA and I would love to work in such an international environment, where I could use my research for the benefit of international development. In Mexico, we do not have a WiN chapter ... yet. The conference inspired me to open a national WiN chapter and back home I will see what can we do about it!





### Khalida Gill, WiN Pakistan

I attended my first WiN Global Conference in 2006 in Ontario — thanks to Canada, which sponsored our participation. Since then, I have attended all the annual conferences and each year I have seen progress: WiN members are increasing and more young scientists are present. The WiN Global Conference is indeed a splendid occasion for many scientists



around the world to showcase their work and build a network that can make a difference in their careers. I believe WiN Global should work more on sponsoring, as many members cannot afford the travel expenses on their own. This year, the IAEA has sponsored more than 50 participants from developing countries, who will benefit from interacting with different nuclear experts and bring home valuable knowledge. I really hope that in future years, there will be more and more similar initiatives and that WiN Global will find a way to overcome the funding problem.

### Maria Petrasova, WiN Slovakia

I am the oldest WiNner at this year's conference — would you believe it? Though, I would rather say I am the 'most experienced' one: after all, I am a young 80! I graduated in August 1958, exactly the same month and year that Slovakia started to build the first nuclear power plant. A coincidence? I dedicated my life to the safety of the people. During my long career as a radiation protection supervisor, I faced many radiation accidents. It was not easy, but each time I learnt something new. We were the pioneers, and we could succeed because we always helped each other. When, in 1997, we founded WiN Slovakia, we were only 12 members. Now we are almost 150! Our success is based on cooperation and mutual support and I hope we will be able to transmit this spirit to the young generation.



### Irene Aegerter, WiN Switzerland

*Reason versus Emotion in the Discussion on Nuclear Energy* is the title of a talk I gave in 1988 at a nuclear conference. This was probably the start of Women in Nuclear, and it is a motto that still resonates today. The nuclear debate is shrouded in irrational fears and it is our duty to overcome emotions with facts. Facts are science and cannot be easily denied. We cannot disregard emotions either; instead, we have to talk about them, remove the fears and explain the facts. Women are more likely to admit and analyse their emotions and that is why they are so important in the communication of nuclear science. We realized how Swiss women were misled by misinformation about nuclear matters in 1979 when a referendum on nuclear energy showed that the overwhelming majority of women were for phasing out nuclear in the country. We decided that we needed to do something about this, so we founded an association with the scope of informing women about energy issues, called *Frauen für Energie*. It was an astounding success and we thought we could connect with our European colleagues and create an international initiative. This is how WiN was born! We knew we had a lot of work to do and that often the media were not on our side. For example, after the Chernobyl accident, a lot of pregnant women in Europe were scared and did not know what to do. I remember at that time seeing a debate on Swiss TV where a panel of male experts were providing information about the accident and addressing questions from the public. Well, no man could really answer the numerous questions from women regarding abortion — I was so furious! Why didn't they have a woman in the panel? A woman would have certainly understood and answered. We always have to keep in mind that women think about their families, their children and their grandchildren: they think about the future generation, not only about today and tomorrow. That is a main difference with men, and that is reason why WiN has to engage in a dialogue with women and give them the chance to make responsible choices relevant to the future of our planet.

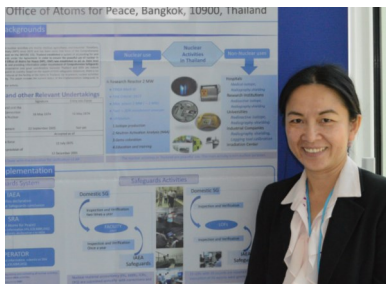


## Hoiam Sayed, Sudan

In Sudan, we still do not have a WiN chapter but during this conference I had the opportunity to discuss the topic with other colleagues and ask for support. Sudan is investing a lot in the nuclear field: we are the third country in the use of radiation techniques to fight hunger and also we are focusing in safeguards and agriculture. I am writing a project proposal for a coordinated research project on food irradiation. I could attend the conference thanks to a grant from the IAEA and I am very proud of having been selected. The IAEA has demonstrated a sincere commitment to women in science! I was eager to talk to other people working in the same field as me, exchange ideas, confront issues and find solutions. My priority, once home, will be to do everything I can to support the opening of a national WiN chapter, as I believe we should learn to help each other more and cooperate for the good of everyone.



## Areerak Rueanngoen, Thailand



I learned about the WiN Global Conference during a regional school of nuclear security in Indonesia organized by the IAEA. I was encouraged to apply, and here I am — with an IAEA grant! I work in the non-proliferation sector and I am presenting a poster on *Implementation of Safeguards in Thailand*. We have a very old research reactor but no nuclear power plants though the government periodically considers plans for nuclear power. I will be able to bring back home the examples I learned here from other countries and other knowledge that will allow us to keep pushing for our nuclear goals.

## Hasna Al Blooshi, WiN UAE

It was a special year for us, as we celebrated the first anniversary of the WiN UAE Chapter. And next year we will be proud to host the WiN Global Conference! In our country, women have a strong presence and their role in society is fundamental. Our government believes and invests in education for both sexes: education is the number one value for our generation. And you can see the results: in a few years the UAE has developed a nuclear power programme and offers excellent educational opportunities in nuclear engineering. ENEC has 21% female employees — a very ambitious figure compared to other nuclear organizations. Next year in Abu Dhabi, our main focus will be to bring knowledge to the people — there will be plenty of presentations, technical tours and forums for discussion. You will have the chance to see all the advances in our present nuclear technologies and we will showcase the UAE as a potential country to work, with a first-class multicultural workforce.



## Brunelle Battistella, WINS

At 25, I am probably among the youngest conference participants. I am presenting a poster on *Measuring the Return on Investment of Nuclear Security Training*, showcasing the example of the World Nuclear Institute for Nuclear Security (WINS) Academy, the first online certification programme in the world for professionals with accountability for nuclear security. How did I decide to engage in this field? Well, I have always been interested in international security and I have a Master's degree in International Affairs. Thanks to an internship opportunity at the CTBTO [*the Comprehensive Nuclear Test-Ban Treaty Organization*], I was exposed to non-proliferation and became very interested in capacity-building and how to train the next generation. Later, I got the chance to specialize in nuclear security when I received a job offer from WINS, where I keep working on professional development. It is very stimulating to see how the focus is changing towards demonstrable competence and more professional development for people with security accountability. I can also see how women find a powerful ally in professional development and certification as they can get professional credibility in a sector that has traditionally been male dominated.



# The Young Generation in the Spotlight

## Impressions of a Talented Young Scientist on her First WiN Global Conference

By Naida Dzidal

As I entered the IAEA Boardroom for the opening session of the 23<sup>rd</sup> WiN Global Annual Conference, I could not shake off the feeling that something was different from any other conference I had attended before. A warm sensation of comfort, cheerful colours and laughter accompanied me to my seat. With surprise, I noticed a lot of young faces around me — friends, colleagues and some familiar faces from the physics classes at the Vienna University of Technology.

And not only attendees, but also quite a few speakers were surprisingly young too. I admit that this was an encouraging fact. Indeed, some of the most prolific youth organizations in the nuclear world were actively participating in the conference: the International Network of Emerging Nuclear Specialists (INENS), the International Youth Nuclear Congress (IYNC) and the Young Generation Network of the Nuclear European Society (ENS-YGN).

Young colleagues like Meena Singelee, Melissa Crawford, Ekaterina Ryabikovskaya and Eileen Radde spoke about their struggles as young female professionals in the nuclear industry. Nothing new for us sitting in the audience, though: we knew we would not be actively encouraged to pursue a science career, that our supervisors would not welcome a pregnancy, no matter at which stage of our professional lives we were, and that we would have to use male changing rooms since the world wasn't planning on us ever visiting a nuclear facility. I mean, we knew all of this since we'd made it this far, right?



However, it was extremely reassuring listening to all these stories because I discovered that I was not alone! And, despite all the obstacles, working at the IAEA I can appreciate how it is expanding its efforts in reaching out, engaging and recruiting younger women who have just completed advanced studies or who have a little experience in the nucle-

ar industry. The IAEA is ahead of the game in its initiatives: plenty of internship, fellowship and consultancy opportunities have been established for increasing the employability of young women. Alongside the IAEA General Conference, several side events targeted the new nuclear generation and discussed the way forward of the IAEA youth talent pipeline.



This makes me feel that there is someone out there watching out for us youngsters. The 'most experienced' generation believes in us, and is fully supporting us. We need to bolster this invaluable connection — we may discover still untapped resources.

And so during the Conference closing session, I looked around and did not see interns, students or senior managers: I saw fellow mentors, both younger and older than myself. People from whom I was learning more and more with each encounter — both professionally and personally. Fellow cheerleaders. And then, suddenly I could explain that unusual feeling I got at the Conference opening session: these people were my supporters, my friends, my guides.

My WiN Global family.

# Interview with Laura Rockwood

## VCDNP Executive Director

By Luisa Milani

*As a textbook example of the perfect plenary chair — and also as master of ceremonies at our conference banquet — Laura Rockwood enlightened and entertained our conference with her vast knowledge and sparkling wit. We have asked her to share her unique insights as the newly appointed director of the Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation (VCDNP).*



**You have recently taken over a new important assignment as the new Executive Director of the VCDNP. What is your experience so far and what are the main goals of your mandate?**

The experience has been as challenging and exciting as it is new for me. The VCDNP was established only 4 years ago as a dedicated non-governmental platform for independent debate, research, outreach and education and training on disarmament and non-proliferation. In just a few short years, my predecessor, Elena Sokova, turned the Center into a “go to” place for conferences, workshops and informal back channel meetings of government officials, academics and civil society. I hope to build on her amazing successes, and continue to expand the VCDNP’s contribution to the global discourse on these important issues. With the support of foundations, governments and other NGOs, I hope that, in addition to serving as a unique convening forum, the VCDNP will be a source of innovative and applied research.

**How would you characterize the current climate surrounding nuclear verification and disarmament?**

Difficult. While great strides have been made in strengthening safeguards and the verification of non-proliferation undertakings, the appetite of some key Member States of the IAEA for substantive discussions on disarmament and international verification of disarmament has waned. Hopefully, the scientific and academic communities can continue to develop techniques and approaches so that, should the

political will to resume such discussions re-emerge, we will be ready to put them to work without delay.

**The WiN Conference widely discussed how to engage the nuclear young generation. What opportunities may the VCDNP offer to students and young professionals?**

The VCDNP offers research positions, training, internships and public seminars of which young professionals may take advantage. One of the goals of the Center is to offer young people interested in issues related to nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation a uniquely situated vantage point from which to carry out independent research. Because of the VCDNP’s proximity to the Vienna International Center, it allows young professionals to profit from exposure to the diplomats and experts who are actually engaged in these issues on a daily basis. It can also serve as a jumping off point for employment in the Vienna-based international organizations.



**Reflecting on the WiN Conference: what are your take away messages?**

Find a mentor; be a mentor. Be persistent and follow your dreams, but always be open to unexpected turns in your professional career.



# Interview with Peter Rickwood

## Founder of Atomic Reporters

By Aleksandra Peeva

**A**tomic Reporters is a Canadian NGO that provides workshops and acts as an information broker offering journalists globally the opportunity to bring more knowledge to cover nuclear events. Peter Rickwood's presentation at the conference attracted a great deal of interest. This interview is the opportunity to discover more about his work.



Photo: D.Calma/IAEA

### Peter, why was Atomic Reporters founded?

From the street corner to the halls of power, there's a dearth of information about nuclear science and technology. Although their stamp is ubiquitous, from saving life to the potential to destroy all of it, journalists and the public are probably more familiar with the DNA double helix than radiation and fission.

'What's it mean, please explain, where's the story here?' was a refrain of journalists, puzzled by the nuclear file, calling the IAEA press office where I worked for many years. It's as if the science didn't exist, that fission was never discovered, that it's not powering reactors, weapons, and whether we like these things or not, informed decisions have to be made about them. So, Atomic Reporters was the proverbial no-brainer. Policy in a democracy is driven by public concern and if journalists can't stay on their toes then the public is not well served.

### What is the mission of Atomic Reporters?

A problem with journalism is that we are frequently required to cover subjects about which we may be ill informed and we tend to take cues from our peers whose authority may be simply from breaking a story first. Yes, it can give rise to group think. Of course journalists can be manipulated as well. Anyone see the recent hoax that eating chocolate can help you lose weight?

I worked in the IAEA through the Iraq debacle. Not for nothing was media's performance prior to the war offered as an example in "When the Press Fails," the title of a 2007 book about the consequences of journalists' dependency on official sources. (For those who forget, except for a few jour-

nalists, IAEA evidence contradicting false claims about weapons of mass destruction in Iraq was not widely reported).

Atomic Reporters is trying to create a larger gene pool of knowledge, more independent sources and encourage healthy scepticism based on knowledge with which to approach the nuclear story. As important as any of our activities is to offer support to younger reporters new to the nuclear file - for whom Chernobyl is just a name and Cold War nuclear tensions are antediluvian.

### Atomic Reporters puts emphasis on discussion, on holding 'conversations' – why?

As an organization we are probably unique in taking the nuclear file to journalists. It's not one sided though. We are trying to encourage a conversation between nuclear specialists and journalists because each can contribute to the other. Nuclear suffers a knowledge deficit; journalism is notorious for lacking context. And then there's science in general. It is engulfed by its own communication crisis – science and technology are increasingly drivers of policy and an informed public is vital to providing checks and balances - except, not infrequently, superstition wins the day.

Ignoring public concern has proven too costly and realization is building that public involvement is an asset, particularly to nuclear safety. In that event it's even more important the public is well served with accurate information, information for action.

### What obstacles do you see to better coverage of nuclear?

Many aspects of nuclear are overshadowed by state security and secrecy. The enterprising reporter will possibly be able to lift the veil. However, nuclear – except when there is a crisis – is not a sexy story with much contemporary appeal and it's unlikely, particularly given today's changing media landscape, an editor would assign a reporter to undertake sustained digging. As it is some states continue to restrict information and hinder journalists from covering nuclear on their home turf. We can't take on the security apparatus of a state but we can support journalists with basic knowledge about nuclear. Atomic Reporters also has to meet the challenge of supporting journalists in countries embarking on nuclear power programmes for the first time and introducing them to specialists. There are also barriers of mistrust keeping specialists and media apart. Some of this is the result of unrealistic expectations on both sides.

# Working for the IAEA Factsheet

## Focus on Gender

By Jane Kim

The IAEA is committed to increasing the representation of women at all levels within the Agency, and especially in senior positions. Not only is this an aim of the **Gender Equality Policy** approved in 2007, it is also to ensure that the Agency utilizes the best talents available in contributing to the world's peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

In the past it has been challenging to find well qualified female professionals. However the situation is improving with more qualified women applying and being selected for our positions.

A growth comparison of different UN entities in the last 20 years shows the Agency ranked relatively high, with an annual increase of 1.6%.

The IAEA works to ensure a positive work environment for all staff, including **family-friendly measures, flexible working hours, policy for the prevention of harassment**, and Departmental **Focal Points for Gender Concerns**. We also hold a variety of forums for staff and stakeholders to discuss gender equality issues at the IAEA, and feature women in scientific, managerial and leadership roles to help with our outreach activities.

Our participation in the **UN System-wide Action Plan on Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-SWAP)** shows that the IAEA is one of the most-improved technical organizations for gender equality and mainstreaming in the UN System.

## Recruitment and Sourcing Resources

By Gustavo Araujo

The IAEA relies on a highly educated professional workforce, with technical expertise and skills not always easily found on the job market. We are continually looking for great talent to join our team and we especially encourage women and candidates from developing countries to apply.

Follow our website and social media channels to find out more about our opportunities:

### IAEA Website

[Employment at the IAEA](#)  
[Working for the IAEA Booklet](#)  
[Resources for Women](#)  
[Women at the IAEA Booklet](#)  
[Current Vacancies at the IAEA](#)

### Employment Opportunities Monthly Email

Subscribe to monthly updates on current vacancies at the IAEA and webinar events by sending an email to [G.Araujo@iaea.org](mailto:G.Araujo@iaea.org).

### Webinars

We conduct monthly webinars on topics of interest to potential applicants such as: **Introduction to the IAEA; Women at the IAEA; The New Recruitment System and Application Process; How to Prepare for Interviews; Benefits and Compensation**. Upcoming webinars are advertised in the monthly email.

### Social Media



## United Nations Federal Credit Union Supports WiN

"I am honored to stand before so many women scientists who are actively engaging leaders on the impact of their programs with the aim of building a better world," said Lindy Ramsdale, Director of Representative Office Operations at [United Nations Federal Credit Union](#), UNFCU, who shared her thoughts on women's empowerment at the Women in Nuclear Global Conference held last August at the Vienna International Centre.

UNFCU was proud to help support the event as an extension of its service mission. The non-profit, cooperative serves the financial needs of the UN community globally and has a representative office at the VIC. Founded in 1947 by 13 United Nations staff members, award-winning UNFCU also has a Board-mandated programme of social responsibility.

"We share your great interest in making a difference in people's lives," said Ms. Ramsdale, who announced that, in addition to its long-term support of IAEA Programme of Action

for Cancer Therapy, UNFCU had recently launched [UNFCU Foundation](#) with the purpose of helping alleviate poverty for women and girls in developing countries through education and healthcare initiatives in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Agenda.

Ms. Ramsdale, a 17-year veteran of UNFCU who frequently gives presentations on financial empowerment to both men and women, added: "My personal advice to all of you is to never give up on your goals and always believe in yourselves as it's your knowledge and determination which will help you succeed in your careers. By participating at this event, you are showing the way."

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### Disclaimer:

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