

# INTERNATIONAL ATOMIC ENERGY AGENCY:

## AN OVERVIEW

**Established:** 1957

**Membership:** 165 states

**Functions:** The main functions of the IAEA are to: encourage and assist research, development and practical application of atomic energy for peaceful uses throughout the world; establish and administer safeguards designed to ensure that such activity assisted by the Agency is not used to further any military purpose; apply safeguards to relevant activities at the request of Member States; apply, under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) and other international treaties, mandatory comprehensive safeguards in non-nuclear weapon States (NNWS) Parties to such treaties.

In carrying out its functions, the Agency conducts its activities in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter to promote peace and international cooperation, and in conformity with policies of the [United Nations](#) for furthering the establishment of worldwide disarmament through safeguards.

The Agency's safeguards system is defined primarily in Art. XII of the [IAEA Statute](#), and in the following documents: INFCIRC/66 (designed to be applied in any state that concluded a Safeguards Agreement), INFCIRC/153 (used as a basis for agreements with States Parties to the NPT), the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), the Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Bangkok), the African Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Pelindaba), the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (Treaty of Rarotonga), and the Brazilian-Argentine Agency for Accounting and Control of Nuclear Materials (ABACC).

The IAEA is an independent international organization that reports annually to the UN General Assembly. When necessary, the IAEA will report to the UN Security Council in regards to instances of members' noncompliance of safeguard and security obligations. Appointed in 2009, Yukiya Amano serves as the Director General of the IAEA.

The IAEA Secretariat is headquartered in Vienna, Austria. Regional offices are located in Geneva, Switzerland; New York, United States; Tokyo, Japan; and Toronto, Canada. Scientific research laboratories are based in Vienna and Seibersdorf, Austria; Trieste, Italy; and Monaco.

### Verification and Compliance:

**Verification:** Under Safeguards Agreements, IAEA inspectors regularly visit nuclear facilities to verify records maintained by State authorities on the whereabouts of nuclear material under their control, to check IAEA-installed instruments and surveillance equipment, and to confirm physical inventories of nuclear material. These and other safeguard measures provide independent, international verification that governments are abiding by their commitments to the peaceful use of nuclear technology. A precondition for the implementation of safeguards is a formal safeguards agreement between the Agency and the State.

There are four types of inspections: *Ad Hoc* (to verify a state's initial nuclear report), *Routine* (the most common inspections which are preformed routinely), *Special* (supplementary inspections executed in unusual circumstances), and finally, *Safeguard Visits* (inspections to declared facilities to confirm the safeguards design information).

The [Additional Protocol](#) is a more intensive, and voluntary, form of safeguarding, which allows for extended inspections with the most advanced technique. As a legal document, the Additional Protocol aims to provide assurances to both declared and undeclared nuclear sites.

***Compliance:*** In accordance with the Statute and existing practice, the Board is responsible for approving safeguards procedures and Safeguards Agreements, and for general supervision of the Agency's safeguards activities. In a case of non-compliance with a safeguards commitment, the Board of Governors of the IAEA is to call upon the State in question to remedy any outstanding issues; the Board will then decide on its referral

to the UN Security Council and General Assembly.

**Principal organs:** [General Conference](#), [Board of Governors](#), and the [Secretariat](#).