Fact Sheet: U.S. Participation EC-US Counter Nuclear Smuggling Workshop
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The United States is committed to preventing terrorists, criminals, and other unauthorized actors from acquiring nuclear and other radioactive materials. Despite significant international progress in strengthening the security of these materials at facilities, seizures of weapons-usable nuclear material in Moldova (2011) and Georgia (2003, 2006, 2010) suggest these materials continue to be trafficked by transnational criminals. Reporting from the International Atomic Energy Agency’s (IAEA) Incident and Trafficking Database also shows nuclear and radioactive materials are encountered out of regulatory control in all regions.

Recognizing the need for strengthened international cooperation to counter nuclear smuggling, the United States and the European Commission co-hosted the “2016 Counter Nuclear Smuggling (CNS) Workshop” at the Joint Research Centre-Institute for Transuranium Elements (JRC-ITU) in Karlsruhe, Germany, March 8-10, 2016. Experts from 28 countries and international organizations shared best practices and lessons learned in investigative and technical capabilities to counter illicit trafficking. The workshop advanced commitments made at previous Nuclear Security Summits and included demonstrations of CNS capabilities outlined in the ‘Statements of Activity and Cooperation to Counter Nuclear Smuggling’ issued at the each Nuclear Security Summit since 2012. Workshop instructors included experts from the JRC-ITU, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Department of Energy, INTERPOL, and the IAEA.

Through a series of informational presentations, exercises, and demonstrations, the instructors guided discussions on state-of-the-art approaches and technical challenges associated with detection, investigative planning, radioactive crime scene management, and nuclear forensic analysis of nuclear smuggling incidents. Workshop participants concluded that close interagency cooperation and international information sharing enable optimized use of investigative and technical capabilities to effectively counter nuclear smuggling.

The March 2016 CNS Workshop marked a significant step in the United States’ collaborative efforts to strengthen international capabilities to prevent nuclear and radioactive materials from falling into the hands of malicious actors.