

7-10-2020

Introduction to the 10th Anniversary INSEN Special Issue

Matteo Gerlini
Sapienza University of Rome

Russel K. Hirst
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Rachel Brooks
University of Tennessee, Knoxville

Follow this and additional works at: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/ijns>

Recommended Citation

Gerlini, Matteo; Hirst, Russel K.; and Brooks, Rachel (2020) "Introduction to the 10th Anniversary INSEN Special Issue," *International Journal of Nuclear Security*. Vol. 6: No. 2, Article 1.

<https://doi.org/10.7290/ijns060201>

Available at: <https://trace.tennessee.edu/ijns/vol6/iss2/1>

This Front Matter is brought to you for free and open access by Volunteer, Open Access, Library Journals (VOL Journals), published in partnership with The University of Tennessee (UT) University Libraries. This article has been accepted for inclusion in *International Journal of Nuclear Security* by an authorized editor. For more information, please visit <https://trace.tennessee.edu/ijns>.

In Memoriam El Hassan Sayouty and Friedrich Holl

With deep respect and gratitude for their service to INSEN and to international education and diplomacy at the highest levels, we dedicate this special issue to our two colleagues who died last year in tragic accidents:

Professor El Hassan Sayouty, distinguished scholar and educator in nuclear security and environmental protection, who died in the Ethiopian Air crash on March 10, 2019.

Professor Friedrich Holl, distinguished scholar and educator in nuclear and cyber security who died in a boating accident on August 13, 2019.

Both men were trusted and beloved friends who worked tirelessly for peace and safety in this world. We miss them greatly.

Thanks from the Editors

The *International Journal of Nuclear Security* thanks each of the authors contributing to this special issue on INSEN, celebrating the organization's 10th anniversary. We also thank the IJNS publication editor, Kristin England, and the other IJNS team members who helped work on this issue: John Batson, Adam Swift, Ethan Barlow, and Kathryn Copeland.

We are grateful to the entire INSEN membership and to IAEA for their dedication to the safety and security of the world we all live in.

INSEN's First Decade

This *IJNS* special issue celebrates the first ten years of the International Nuclear Security Education Network (INSEN). A partnership between the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the international academic community, INSEN was established in 2010 to promote nuclear security education. The articles in this issue focus on the shared education and training experiences of INSEN members in this new academic field of nuclear security. This special issue also features sketches of INSEN life provided by a number of its chairs, who share their thoughts and feelings about INSEN's significance for the organization's educators and leaders, and who chronicle the transformation of the network.

In 2009, the year before INSEN was born, the IAEA, in consultation with university representatives from around the world, discussed creation of a Master of Science program and a certificate program in nuclear security. After revising the draft that described these programs, the IAEA published the description in an issue of the *IAEA Nuclear Security Series*¹. Although some issues are still far from settled, these discussions, and publication of the article, not only sparked the development of INSEN, but also advanced several additional developments in nuclear security education.

¹ <https://www-pub.iaea.org/MTCD/publications/PDF/Pub1439web.pdf>

IAEA's guidance for a new MSc was groundbreaking. Despite the need for nuclear safety and safeguards, nuclear security did not yet have academic status. It didn't have a specific disciplinary frame, as it existed in a no-man's-land among security studies, nuclear engineering, and all the disciplines involved in nuclear security. Nuclear security is an interdisciplinary field like nuclear safeguards, but, unlike nuclear safeguards, it was absent, in terms of academic definition, from international treaties, and it missed out on institutional commitments. It did not figure in the EURATOM framework, nor was it represented in the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

So, it was hard in 2009 for a university to create and run a new graduate course in CBRN protection curricula, for instance. This was one of the primary reasons for establishing INSEN the following year. INSEN strengthened exchange of ideas, as well as cooperation among members, to define and promote nuclear security education at the university level. In this past decade of activity, INSEN has also become a pool of resources, with its members distributing and accessing educational materials through three working groups. Members may find resources for teaching from Working Group 1, cooperation frameworks for faculty development from Working Group 2, and outreach materials for nuclear security education from Working Group 3.

Looking back, we must reassess the history of nuclear security and its worth, noting the international context in which INSEN was established. We recognize the speech by President Obama in Prague, on April 5, 2009,² as the declaration of US commitment to the field of nuclear security. In the speech, he announced the US government's decision to call up an international conference on nuclear security, held the following year in Washington. It was the beginning of the nuclear security summits, a series of conferences marking the second term of President Obama. These summits introduced a new kind of multilateralism to the diplomatic toolbox, the "gift baskets."

There were commitments by clusters of countries sharing priorities and tasks, committing to common goals, but still without consensus in their conferences. The tasks proposed were not affordable for all countries participating in the summit, so some countries' delegations voluntarily agreed to a common text, a final communique using stronger language than usually issued from international conferences. This was very healthy for nuclear security summits (NSS), leading to results in specific fields of nuclear security and in some countries' nuclear security efforts.

Among these healthy results was the first nuclear security school, offered by Italy and steered by the IAEA and the International Center of Theoretical Physics, "Abu Salam." Operating on the center's premises in Trieste, the school is the first to focus entirely on nuclear security. Many of its cohorts have been INSEN members, and they have continued to improve their capabilities in tailoring education devoted to nuclear security.

The NSS cycle concluded in 2016, having provided many advances in making the world a safer place. Unfortunately, we still cannot rule out a nuclear terrorist attack, and this is a primary reason why international partnership and cooperation in nuclear security education must continue to develop. We cannot let it flag without losing one of the main assets for countering criminal activity. In its network, its knowledge, and its tasks, this partnership and cooperation must continue to be supported and internationalized. We must do this with much greater devotion and cooperation than smuggling and terrorist organizations themselves, whose interest in nuclear and radiological materials is constant.

INSEN is interdisciplinary as well as international, drawing members both civilian and military in the fields of nuclear transport and radiation protection, reactor science, medical science, physical security,

² <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-barack-obama-prague-delivered>

cyber security, international policy and diplomacy, and many others—including communication studies. One instance of this wide interdisciplinarity is INSEN’s relationship with the very journal you’re reading, the *International Journal of Nuclear Security*, sponsored by the department of English and the Institute for Nuclear Security at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville, USA. The journal’s editor, a professor in the UTK Department of English, joined INSEN in 2015 and promotes it as the world’s premiere organization for scholarship in nuclear security and safety. One way he does this in the direction of his own discipline—communication and rhetoric—is by engaging his students as writers and editors to support INSEN’s mission. These kinds of relationships have been possible because of INSEN’s decade of outreach and welcome to all disciplines and all countries in the mission of education and training for nuclear security.

During the editorial work of this issue, the COVID-19 pandemic has spread across the globe, with terrible effect. No one can predict the exact course of this plague, but already we know it has serious consequences for nuclear security and safety, as it affects security personnel, educators, diplomats, and everyone involved in the security missions. It also taxes global resources and economies, and the upheavals being produced give opportunities for abuses of power and terrorist activity.

With all the more reason, then, INSEN’s members—both current and future— must bond together and stand strong in the mission of education and international cooperation to guard the world from nuclear accident and aggression. This is our pledge!

We hope you will enjoy and benefit from this special issue of the *International Journal of Nuclear Security* devoted to INSEN’s first decade.



Matteo Gerlini
Sapienza University of Rome
Guest Editor, *International Journal of Nuclear Security Special Issue on INSEN*



Rachel Brooks
MA student, University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Editorial Associate and Special Issue Liaison, *International Journal of Nuclear Security*



Russel Hirst
University of Tennessee, Knoxville
Editor, *International Journal of Nuclear Security*