

# Nuclear Law

International Atomic Energy Agency  
Editor

# Nuclear Law

The Global Debate



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*Editor*

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# Preface

Nuclear law is an ever-evolving field, with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at its centre. This highly specialized body of law permeates the entire nuclear sector, enabling the safe, secure and peaceful use of nuclear technology.

Because of it, we are able to enjoy the many life-saving benefits of nuclear science and technology, including cancer care, clean energy and better crop yields.

The IAEA and the international community have built a near universal safeguards regime that seeks to detect and deter the diversion of nuclear material from peaceful nuclear activities to the manufacture of nuclear weapons. Furthermore, we have built a safety—and security—first culture and adapted to new threats such as terrorism.

Nuclear science and technology evolve, driven by innovation and the need to address ongoing and emerging challenges, such as the COVID-19 pandemic and climate change, for example. Nuclear law must evolve with them. That is why we are publishing this book as part of the IAEA's First International Conference on Nuclear Law: The Global Debate.

In 2022, experts from around the world came together at this unique global forum to discuss key issues in nuclear law and to formulate a vision for the future. This collection of essays compiles insights from the world's thought leaders in this field. Some of the essays reflect on the history of nuclear law and its evolution, some focus on specific issues within the four main branches of nuclear law—safety, security, safeguards and nuclear liability—and others highlight some of the areas in which nuclear science and technology play an important role.

I am confident that this book will be useful to those developing and implementing policies and those writing laws and regulations. I believe it will be of interest to sister agencies within the United Nations system and other international and regional organizations whose mandates include peace and security and sustainable development. Some essays will be of particular interest to the legal and insurance industries involved in advising governments and industry on nuclear issues. For those in academia and civil society, the book may well prompt some thought-provoking scholarship and advocacy. I hope it will inspire and inform students and young professionals, especially women, who are pursuing careers in nuclear law, policy or industry.

But it is my goal that this collection proves insightful not only to those working on nuclear issues. I would like all of us who benefit from the life-saving power of nuclear science and technology to understand what goes into making it happen.

It goes without saying that this book is made possible through the generosity of the distinguished authors who made time to share their insights. I extend my sincere gratitude to them. I would also like to acknowledge the work of many colleagues in the IAEA's Secretariat who made this unique and important publication possible. These include the staff of the Office of Legal Affairs and of the Division of Conference and Document Services of the Department of Management; my advisers in the Director General's Office; as well as colleagues in the Department of Safeguards, the Department of Nuclear Safety and Security, the Department of Nuclear Energy and the Department of Technical Cooperation. Finally, I would like to express my particular appreciation for the support of IAEA Legal Adviser and Director of the Office of Legal Affairs, P. L. Johnson, and Section Heads in the Office of Legal Affairs, W. Tonhauser (who also served as Scientific Secretary for the Conference), I. Suseanu and J. Lusser. Special thanks to A. Wetherall, C. de Francia and I. Pletukhina of the IAEA Office of Legal Affairs for their indispensable assistance.

Rafael Mariano Grossi  
Director General  
International Atomic Energy Agency  
Vienna, Austria

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