

14 June 2015

The Honorable Laura Kennedy
Acting Governor to the Board of Governors
The International Atomic Energy Agency
Boltzmannngasse 16
1090 Vienna, Austria

Dear Madam Ambassador:

I write as the chairman of the Advisory Committee on Historical Documentation to the United States Department of State.

It has come to the Committee's attention that the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) lacks a policy or program for the systematic review, declassification, and release of restricted and other classified material in its archives. Because of the IAEA's vital role in international affairs since its founding in 1957, the Committee finds its lack of a comprehensive archival access policy unfortunate and troubling. Besides its responsibility for promoting the use of nuclear energy for a variety of peaceful purposes, the Agency led the way in establishing rules and procedures for safeguarding the operation of nuclear reactors and related facilities and materials in order to discourage the diversion of those resources into military programs. In particular, since the signing of the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1968, the IAEA has created a system of international safeguards designed to ensure that signatory countries comply with the treaty's peaceful use objectives.

Under existing IAEA policy, nevertheless, archival records relating to the development and implementation of safeguards policy, even during the Agency's earliest years, are closed to research. More broadly, records on Agency decision-making are likewise unavailable in Vienna. The unavailable records include even the minutes of Board of Governors meetings dating back to the late 1950s.

In light of these concerns, the Advisory Committee on Historical Documentation encourages the IAEA to develop processes to open up its historical archives to the fullest extent possible. As one of the founders of the IAEA, the U.S. government, in our judgment, has a special responsibility to ensure that the Agency formulates and implements principles of openness and transparency. Therefore, the Committee requests that the Department of State take steps to work with other interested governments in urging the IAEA to develop an agency-wide policy

on disclosure of official documents, including a policy for the systematic declassification and release of older records.

I very much hope that you will give our request your most serious consideration and raise our concerns with your distinguished colleagues and counterparts. I look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenient.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard H. Immerman', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Richard H. Immerman
Marvin Wachman Director
Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy
Chair, Advisory Committee on Historical Documentation
to the United States Department of State