

**Third Meeting  
Geneva, 5-9 December 2005**

**Meeting of Experts  
Geneva, 13-24 June 2005**

Item 5 of the provisional agenda

**Consideration of the content, promulgation, and adoption of codes of conduct for scientists**

## **Review and Analysis of Relevant Elements of Existing Codes of Conduct in Other Fields**

Summary of Background Paper prepared by the Secretariat<sup>1</sup>

### **INTRODUCTION**

1. The Secretariat has examined codes of conduct from a variety of different fields, including the nuclear industry, engineering, pharmacology, business and professional personnel management, at the international, national and sub-national levels, in an attempt to identify elements which may facilitate States Parties' consideration of *the content, promulgation, and adoption of codes of conduct for scientists*.

2. Identifying and summarising these codes has highlighted a number of principles and resulting obligations which may be of relevance to the Meeting of Experts. For the purposes of this paper, these elements have been grouped into five general areas:

- (i) The global public good;
- (ii) Respect for governance measures;
- (iii) Scientific integrity
- (iv) Scientific stewardship; and
- (v) Scientific obligations.

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<sup>1/</sup> This background paper has been prepared at the request of the Chairman. The contents of the paper are intended to be indicative rather than exhaustive, and to provide an overview and starting point for States Parties who may wish to conduct further research. Comments, additions and corrections from States Parties are welcome.

## INTERGOVERNMENTAL AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

### International Atomic Energy Agency

3. In 2003 the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) endorsed a *Code of Conduct on the Safety of Radioactive Sources* following a declaration of an *Action Plan* at the G8 Summit at Evian. This code replaces an earlier version dating from 2001. The Code is aimed at states rather than individuals, but nevertheless contains elements of interest. The IAEA indicates that the implementation of this Code of Conduct will help national authorities to ensure that radioactive sources are used within an appropriate framework of radiation safety and security, recognising that radioactive sources are used throughout the world for a variety of beneficial purposes, such as in industry, medicine, research, agriculture and education.

### The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons

4. The Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) has begun the process to develop a formal Code of Conduct to address the ethical considerations of those involved with the peaceful use of chemistry. To date this has yet to yield a formal Code but the activities undertaken so far may be of interest to the 2005 Meeting of States Parties and Meeting of Experts of the Biological Weapons Convention.

5. As a result of a series of action plans adopted at the First Review Conference of the Chemical Weapons Convention (CWC), the OPCW established its Ethics Project. The Ethics Project is seeking to develop links with academic research centres, educational and other relevant institutions and organisations, as well as entities affected by the Chemical Weapons Convention to promote an awareness of the ethical dimensions of the Convention. The project is in its preliminary stage, that of exploring avenues for dialogue and cooperation. The Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) is currently preparing an assessment of existing codes in an effort to work towards the development of an OPCW Code of Conduct.

## PROFESSIONAL ORGANISATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, BODIES AND INSTITUTIONS

6. Of particular note are the codes of conduct of engineering organizations. In contrast to some of the other fields examined in this paper, engineering appears to have a number of fundamental principles and canons which reappear in various forms in the codes of individual organizations.

### Global Public Good

7. Codes at the professional level demonstrate a range of different approaches to the codification process. One, as adopted by the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia in its *Code of Professional Conduct* begins by asserting a principle enshrined within the code and then places a series of obligations on its members. Another example of this approach can be found in the *Code of Ethics* of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations. A similar approach is adopted by the American Institute of Chemical Engineers in its *Code of Ethics*. It is also possible to take this concept one step further and to add a number of more detailed guidelines

describing the implementation of the code. The *Code of Ethics of Engineers* as adopted by the American Society of Agricultural Engineers contains principles, canons and guidelines.

8. Another permutation of this approach, one which more closely resembles international instruments governing the activities of states (such as the Biological Weapons Convention), is comprised of a limited number of articles, each of which details both a core belief (or principle) shared by the members of the organization, as well as a specific undertaking to modulate their behavior accordingly. Such an approach was adopted in the *Code of Professional, Social and Ethical Responsibility* of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees. Alternatively, it is possible to forgo an explicit mention of underlying principles and a number of codes are comprised solely of lists of measures directing the activities of the associated members. This approach was adopted by the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers in its *Code of Ethics*. Another example of this approach can be found in the *Code of Ethics* of the Association of Engineering Technicians and Technologists of Newfoundland.

#### Respect for Governance Measures

9. Many of the professional codes contained reference to existing legislation, regulations and guidelines which complement their principles and objectives. One example can be found in the *Code of Professional Conduct* of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia. Similar provisions can be found in the *Code of Professional, Social and Ethical Responsibility* of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees. Another code, the *Principles* of the International Chamber of Commerce, discussed how existing legislation, regulations and guidelines formed the starting point for any attempt to improve the governance of their field. The *Code of Practice and Ethics* of the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (ISPAI) discussed in more detail the relationship between the code and other governance measures.

#### Scientific Integrity

10. Codes which incorporated principles and obligations relating to ensuring the integrity of scientific and professional conduct included the *Code of Ethics* of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. Other codes, such as the *Code of Professional, Social and Ethical Responsibility* of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees, identify this duty explicitly as a need to ensure professional integrity. Some codes, such as the *Code of Ethics* of the Association of Engineering Technicians and Technologists of Newfoundland go on to outline specific obligations derived from the necessity of upholding professional integrity.

#### Scientific Stewardship

11. Several of the codes identified for this paper refer to the use of best practices, the adoption of continuing training and other activities necessary to ensure the highest possible professional standards. The *Code of Professional Conduct* of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia is one example, and goes on to outline obligations derived from such principles. The same is true for codes from other disciplines as can be seen from the *Code of Professional, Social and Ethical Responsibility* of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical,

Professional and Technical Employees. Similar commitments are undertaken in the engineering fields, such as illustrated in the *Code of Ethics* of the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers. These obligations can also be found in the *Code of Ethics* of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations, and the implementation of these obligations is developed even further by other engineering bodies, such as in the *Code of Ethics of Engineers* of the American Society of Agricultural Engineers. Some of the codes identified also incorporate more practically-oriented obligations relating to the conduct of professional activities, including specific reference to the precautionary principle.

#### Scientific Obligations

12. The complexity of the arrangements for scientific obligations differ from code to code. Some are comparatively simple, such as that found in the *Code of Ethics* of the World Federation of Engineering Organizations. Other codes, such as the *Code of Professional Conduct* of the Pharmaceutical Society of Australia provide a clear-cut principle of scientific (or professional) obligations. A few codes provide simplistic mechanisms for reporting suspected occurrences of non-compliance, such as the one found in the *Code of Ethics* of the Association of Engineering Technicians and Technologists of Newfoundland. Other codes focus primarily on protecting the interests of those who uphold their effective implementation. One such example can be found in the *Code of Professional, Social and Ethical Responsibility* of the International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees.

13. At the opposite end of the complexity spectrum are codes which provide exhaustively detailed complaints procedures and sanctions for non-compliance, such as the *Code of Practice and Ethics* of the Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland (ISPAI).

#### **COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL ORGANISATIONS, ASSOCIATIONS, BODIES AND INSTITUTIONS**

14. Four of the five general areas used to analyse the intergovernmental and professional codes, also correspond with the efforts made by commercial and industry bodies at the international and national or sub-national levels under their *Corporate Social Responsibility* (CSR) programmes. The nuclear industry provides a suitable example.

15. One example of the commitment of this industry at the international level to the global public good, respect for governance measures, scientific integrity and scientific stewardship can be found in the *Charter of Ethics* of the global organisation for nuclear industry bodies, the World Nuclear Association. At the national level, the *Code of Ethics* of the American Nuclear Society (ANS) provides an example of similar commitments. At the sub-national level the actors are individual nuclear industry businesses, and the amount of information available regarding the commitment to the global public good becomes more restricted. For example, the *Values* of British Nuclear Fuels (BNFL) are comprised of single sentence statements of principles.

## CODES OF CONDUCT REFERENCED IN THE PAPER

American Institute of Chemical Engineers

*Code of Ethics*

[http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/codes/coe/American%20Institute%20of%20Chemical%20Engineers%20Code%20of%20Ethics\(Main\).html](http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/codes/coe/American%20Institute%20of%20Chemical%20Engineers%20Code%20of%20Ethics(Main).html)

American Nuclear Society

*Code of Ethics*

<http://www.ans.org/about/coe/>

American Society of Agricultural Engineers

*Code of Ethics of Engineers*

<http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/codes/coe/American%20Society%20of%20Agricultural%20Engineers.html>

Association of Engineering Technicians and Technologists of Newfoundland

*Code of Ethics*

<http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/codes/coe/AETTN-CoE.html>

British Nuclear Fuels

*Values*

<http://www.bnfl.com/CSR2005/01gcr/gcr6.htm>

Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers

*Code of Ethics*

[http://www.ieee.org/portal/site/mainsite/menuitem.818c0c39e85ef176fb2275875bac26c8/index.jsp?&pName=corp\\_level1&path=about/whatis&file=code.xml&xsl=generic.xsl](http://www.ieee.org/portal/site/mainsite/menuitem.818c0c39e85ef176fb2275875bac26c8/index.jsp?&pName=corp_level1&path=about/whatis&file=code.xml&xsl=generic.xsl)

International Atomic Energy Agency

*Code of Conduct on the Safety of Radioactive Sources*

<http://www.iaea.org/Publications/Standards/>

International Chamber of Commerce

*Principles*

[http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/codes/coe/International\\_Chamber\\_of\\_Commerce\\_practice.html](http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/codes/coe/International_Chamber_of_Commerce_practice.html)

International Federation of Commercial, Clerical, Professional and Technical Employees

*Code of Professional, Social and Ethical Responsibility*

<http://www.itcilo.it/english/actrav/telearn/global/ilo/guide/fietcode.htm>

Internet Service Providers Association of Ireland

*Code of Practice and Ethics*

[www.ispai.ie/docs/cope.pdf](http://www.ispai.ie/docs/cope.pdf)

Pharmaceutical Society of Australia  
*Code of Professional Conduct*  
<http://www.psa.org.au/ecms.cfm?id=45>

World Federation of Engineering Organizations  
*Code of Ethics*  
<http://www.iit.edu/departments/csep/codes/coe/wfeo-coe.html>

World Nuclear Association  
*Charter of Ethics*  
<http://world-nuclear.org/aboutwna/charter.htm>

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