



United States Department of State

*Bureau of International Security and
Nonproliferation*

Washington, D.C. 20520

March 3, 2016

Dr. Akos Horvath
Director General
Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Energy Research (MTA EK)

Dear Dr. Akos Horvath,

On behalf of the U.S. Department of State, I would like to thank the experts from Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Energy Research (MTA EK), Nuclear Security Department who participated in the second international Galaxy Serpent exercise on National Nuclear Forensics Libraries (NNFL) which took place June through December 2015. The U.S. Department of State sponsored this activity, which was held under the auspices of the Nuclear Forensics International Technical Working Group (ITWG), because of the value of NNFLs to nuclear security. NNFLs help governments determine whether nuclear or other radioactive material found out of regulatory control is consistent with their holdings and provides a basis to work with other governments against on-going transnational threats like illicit trafficking.

Over the past several years, the International Atomic Energy Agency, Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism, ITWG and Nuclear Security Summit have all worked to develop the NNFL concept, and the participation of your experts in Galaxy Serpent has helped to advance these efforts. During the exercise, experts from 28 nations and three international organizations utilized synthetic radiological sealed source data to assemble a hypothetical NNFL. They then consulted the library to assess whether data from a hypothetical illicit trafficking seizure and another investigative scenario were consistent with the library. This exercise advanced participant's technical capacity with NNFLs, while illustrating the efficacy of such national libraries in investigating material found out of regulatory control. Furthermore, the best practices and lessons learned from the Galaxy Serpent 2.0 exercise represent a unique set of resources for countries beginning to develop NNFLs.

Hungary continues to be a valued partner in this effort. Your scientific experts' participation in these exercises assist in maturing and advancing nuclear forensics as an important tool for investigations involving nuclear or radiological material out of regulatory control. The United States sincerely appreciates these unique contributions of the experts from Hungarian Academy of Sciences, Centre for Energy Research (MTA EK) and hopes that experts from your government will consider participating in a third version of the Galaxy Serpent exercise series that is being planned for the third or fourth quarter of 2016.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Geoffrey M. Odlum".

Geoffrey M. Odlum
Director of the Office of WMD Terrorism
Bureau of International Security and Nonproliferation (ISN/WMDT)
U.S. Department of State