

FOREWORD

The accident which took place on 26 April 1986 at the Chernobyl nuclear power plant in Ukraine was to have a decisive influence on the development of international nuclear law over the following two decades.

Within six months of the accident, a convention on early notification of a nuclear accident and a convention on assistance in the event of a nuclear accident or radiological emergency were negotiated and adopted under the auspices of the International Atomic Energy Agency. In 1988, a joint protocol forming a bridge between the two existing international nuclear liability regimes was established. 1994 saw the adoption of a convention establishing international benchmarks for nuclear safety, followed by a convention on the safety of spent fuel and radioactive waste management in 1997. The existing international regimes governing liability for nuclear damage have been significantly reinforced and a new global regime created.

The purpose of this compendium, jointly produced by the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency and the International Atomic Energy Agency, is to provide thoughtful analysis on each of the above instruments, demonstrating the extent to which progress has been made and identifying areas in which further improvement would be desirable. It reproduces a number of articles which have been published in the OECD/NEA *Nuclear Law Bulletin*, accompanied by some previously unpublished works. It also summarises the practical steps taken by the respective international organisations that support the international legal framework.