

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
NUCLEAR REGULATORY COMMISSION

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34TH REGULATORY INFORMATION CONFERENCE (RIC)

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TECHNICAL SESSION - W18

MAKING A GLOBAL IMPACT-WOMEN IN INTERNATIONAL

NUCLEAR POLICY MAKING

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WEDNESDAY,

MARCH 9, 2022

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The Technical Session met via Video-
Teleconference, at 3:00 p.m. EST, Nader Mamish,
Director, Office of International Programs, Nuclear
Regulatory Commission, presiding.

PRESENT:

NADER MAMISH, Director, Office of International
Programs, NRC

STEPHANIE ARCHIE, Administrative Assistant, OEDO/NRC

MARGARET DOANE, Deputy Director General and Head of
Management, International Atomic Energy Agency

LAURA DUDES, Regional Administrator, RII/NRC

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Factors Team, Operator Licensing & Human
Factors Branch, Division of Reactor Oversight,
NRR/NRC

ANDREA FERKILE, Director for the Office of
Nonproliferation Policy, National Nuclear
Security Administration, U.S. Department of
Energy

JOYCE CONNERY, Chair, Defense Nuclear Facilities
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P R O C E E D I N G S

(3:00 p.m.)

MR. MAMISH: Good afternoon.

MS. ARCHIE: Good afternoon, and thank you for joining us to celebrate the NRC's Women's History Month event sponsored by the NRC Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee, FWPAC, and our Office of International Programs. I am Stephanie Archie, Chair of FWPAC. And on behalf of our committee, I would like to extend a warm welcome to Chairman Hanson, Commissioner Wright, and Deputy Executive Director Darrell Roberts, all who are in attendance today.

I would also like to welcome our esteemed panel who you will be hearing from shortly. This year's event is a result of the dedicated efforts of an amazing group of people who have worked hard to put it together. I want to give a sincere thanks to our FWPAC members and volunteers, my fellow FWPAC board members, Vice Chair Molly Keefe Forsyth, and Secretary Justin Vazquez, and finally to our executive sponsors, MJ Ross-Lee and Brooke Clark.

I also want to thank the members of the NRC's Office of International Programs and our Region

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II office who have worked so hard to organize all aspects of this events, Joanne Savoy, Jennifer Holzman, and Andrea Jones. I'm so excited about today's program. Today we'll have the opportunity to hear some inspiring remarks from an impressive panel of women.

And you will also have an opportunity to participate in our annual Equal Employment Opportunity award presentation ceremony during which we will present our EEO award to a very deserving individual. To start the program, I am proud to introduce Nader Mamish, the Director of NRC's Office of International Programs, who will provide introductory remarks and moderate our panel. Nader?

MR. MAMISH: Thank you very much, and good afternoon, everyone. I'm delighted to be here with you to chair this panel on making a global impact, women and international nuclear policymaking. We have an outstanding panel, and I'm looking forward to hearing from each of them.

My opening remarks are brief to devote as much time as possible for our discussion. It's been demonstrated that including diverse people and perspectives in policymaking process results in

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stronger, much more effective policy. Diversity enables policymakers to better anticipate and address the needs of those wherein their policies can be impacted.

The NRC is immensely fortunate. They have talented women at all levels, both within our own staff and amongst the U.S. government colleagues, women who enrich the agency's domestic and international work and assist in broader foreign policy decision initiatives. Today, our panelists will share experiences that led to change, broaden international nuclear policymaking, enforced interesting and dynamic career paths for themselves and for others.

Throughout the past few years, the NRC has embarked on efforts to apply transformative thinking to all aspects of our work, to think outside the box, and work smarter and more creatively. I'm very pleased to note that this panel exemplifies those transformational efforts. This year, we have combined a traditional RIC panel with the annual event run by our Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee in honor of the Women's History Month and International Women's Day.

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NRC advisory committees play an important role in helping the NRC meet its diversity and inclusion goals and enhancing opportunities for Agency employees. It is an honor for me to be part of this event where I get to share the good work with our RIC stakeholders. Before I introduce our panelists, I want to remind you that if you would like to ask a question, you can do so using the chat function. We will address audience questions later in our program.

It is now my pleasure to introduce Margie Doane. I'm sure most of you remember Margie from her time at the NRC where she most recently served as Executive Director for Operations before leaving the Agency last year to assume the role of Deputy Director General for management at the International Atomic Energy Agency. Margie, we would love it if you would kick things off and kick our discussion with some introductory remarks. Margie?

MS. DOANE: Thank you, Nader. Thank you, OIP. And thank you, FWPAC and all my friends at NRC and others who are here today. So I'm really excited about this. I love the topic, and I can't wait to hear from the panelists and also the questions

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that you have today.

So let me just start out with a few introductory remarks myself. First of all, it is important that we are here to talk about this important topic. For today's discussion, I'm going to draw from my experience, as Nader said, from both the NRC and as the current Deputy Director General and head of Department of Management at the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Okay. I'm going to say a few words about policymaking. But if you take anything away from what I contribute today, it would be my recommendation for your to join the international nuclear policy debate. What is this debate and why would the NRC as a technical agency be involved in nuclear policy?

Nuclear policy comes in many forms. At the NRC, policies involving civilian use of nuclear materials are of significant importance. And I have spent a great deal of my career cooperating with other nations to promote nuclear safety.

Importantly, the NRC is one of many U.S. government agencies involved in the development of U.S. policy positions. And you're going to hear from

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prominent women in this field that will highlight other Agency work. It was essential throughout the time that I was working at the NRC that collaboration among the U.S. agencies goes smoothly so that when we entered cooperation with other nations, the U.S. position was clear and consistently advocated.

NRC as a technical agency has a unique role to play in developed U.S. nuclear policy because policy positions are often trained by the underlying nuclear safety questions. For example, in nuclear energy, the U.S. has advocated for a measured approach for international standard setting. That is commiserate or consistent with the level of safety.

Other countries' governments have the policy position that you can never be safe enough. And safety standards should always strive to keep up with the latest thinking on how to make the technology safer. I enjoyed also my time that I spent cooperating and negotiating nuclear safety principles and standards with international regulatory counterparts aimed at reaching consensus on these and other issues. These are really wonderful times.

Another interesting aspect of NRC's

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policy position is that as an independent agency, the NRC does not set U.S. foreign policy. That's for the president and not the U.S. agencies. But NRC is involved in the development of the policy to ensure that political views do not inadvertently alter NRC's technical and scientific conclusions.

For example, when setting policies for exports, the NRC is often called on to give its views on its licensing activities, the risks technology, which uses, et cetera. NRC collaborates with the U.S. states and licensees to ensure that it is well aware of the technical issues before giving its final views. If you are one of the international participants in the audience today, you've probably seen these or similar programs in your country informing your policy positions.

The second point I want to make is about the importance of having more women voices in the nuclear policy debate. Why? Because women are half the population, and any policymaking process that does not adequately include them is likely to have blind spots.

This approach does not only elevate the women's role, but also benefits everybody. This is

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what an increasing body of research is showing. McKenzie has been writing a series of reports investigating a business case for diversity, and it contains some interesting facts.

For example, it showed that greater representation, the higher the likelihood of outperformance. Companies with more than 30 percent women executives were more likely to outperform companies where this percentage ranged 10 to 30. And in term, these companies were more likely to outperform those with even fewer women executives or not at all.

A substantial differential likelihood of outperformance, 48 percent, separates the most from the least gender diverse companies. The research also showed that diversity winners and adopting systematic business-led approaches to inclusion in diversity. It also highlighted areas where companies should take far bolder action to create a long-lasting inclusive culture and promote inclusive behavior.

We're talking about inclusion which is much more than a percentage of representation. You would've heard the saying diversity is being invited

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to the party while inclusion is being invited to the dance, while full inclusion looks more like being in a position to weigh in on decisions regarding the music, the date, the theme of the party, really coming to the dance. This is something that IEA takes very seriously.

In 2020, the Director General committed to the goal achieving gender parity in the professional and higher categories by 2025. Following this announcement, he adopted special measures for gender parity. These measures are aimed at encouraging women to apply for vacancies in the professional and higher categories, creating conditions for more balanced representation.

And we're on our way to meeting that goal. We're there DDGs and for professionals, we're at 37 percent. To help increase the number of women in nuclear, we also have started a scholarship for young women pursuing master's programs in nuclear related studies at accredited universities.

Upon graduation, selected women are provided with an opportunity to pursue an internship facilitated by the IEA for up to 12 months. The name of this is the Maria Sklodowska-Curie scholarship

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program. And I invite all of you to google it and especially young women in the audience.

Since then, 210 students of 93 countries have been selected to participate in this program. This concludes my introductory comments. And I look forward to hearing from my fellow panelists and to take questions. Back to you, Nader.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks so much, Margie. Now I'd like to turn to Laura Dudes. I think many of you know Laura as the Administrator of our Region II office which has had substantial international engagement as the office overseeing the construction of the AP1000 units at Vogtle Plant. Laura has been personally involved in a broad variety of international cooperation activities throughout her NRC career. Laura, the floor is yours.

MS. DUDES: Thank you, Nader. And thank you for setting up this panel. This is probably going to be the best part of my day. And I thank all the fellow panelists.

Listening to Margie, Margie, you're always such an inspiration and you're always hard to follow too. So I'm going to kind of shift a little bit on my messaging. I have had quite a bit of

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domestic experience here at the NRC and held several jobs.

But I've also had several international interactions. Nader mentioned some of our bilateral work with the UK, with China. I've had the opportunity to share a working group on the regulation of new reactors at NEA.

I have to say that was a real enriching experience for me. And I think the diversity of that group, that was actually a working group that I was the chair of. And the co-chair was a colleague from Switzerland, and we're both women.

And it was just really an amazing thing to see in a working group of that many people. But it was a really rich working group. And we produced a tremendous amount of guidance for the whole world to use when you're embarking on a new nuclear program.

And we developed a lot of relationships and we learned from one another in those interactions. And it was a really important activity at the time of the nuclear renaissance. And thankfully, those documents live on today as people embark on new programs.

But I do want to leave a message or talk

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a little bit about, well, how did I get into this, and maybe encourage everyone who's listening. I had great mentors that kind of brought me into the international arena, whether it was my first early interaction as a branch chief to go over on a bilateral and kind of learn all the different policy aspects and the bilateral. And then I had inventors who would invite me to their meetings at the Nuclear Energy Agency.

And as a young woman, I would look around and I would think, well, there's not a lot of young women here. And I was so grateful to my mentors who thought it was a great opportunity for me to really learn all of the different aspects of that. So if there's a takeaway for folks who are listening, be a mentor.

And if you have these opportunities to bring young women into the international arena and early in their career so they get comfortable, they learn the policy aspects of it. And then they're going to be fantastic contributors for the remainder of their career. I think that is one key to success. So with that, I think I'll stop. I really look forward to all of the questions that folks have, and

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I thank you for the opportunity.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you for those perspectives, Laura. I would like to introduce Kamishan Martin. Kamishan is a human factors engineer at the NRC. Last year, she returned from a five-year assignment at the OECD Nuclear Energy Agency in Paris where she focused on safety culture, human, and organizational factors, public communication, and stakeholder involvement regarding waste management and decommissioning activities. Kamishan?

MS. MARTIN: Thank you. When you read out everything like that, it certainly makes me feel like I did a lot more than I felt I was doing at the time. But I would like to open up with saying the environment that we're in and the environment of the times is very important when you think about not just gender equality as far as what women can contribute but also what kind of rich experiences we can have as women.

And that includes the type of relationships that we build and the type of inputs and insights that we may gain. And that starts -- at least for me, it started in my academic career

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starting at a very large institution for my undergraduate degree and then going to Florida A&M for my graduate degree and that is definitely a comparison of different environments. And going from a traditional American university to an HBCU, the type of support and the type of diversity in that type of environment definitely enriched my experience.

And I was one of those who was recruited directly from a university to come to the NRC which had an even different environment for me to experience. As stated, for about 14 years, I did work as a technical person in the area of human factors and safety culture which is important when you think about that being something that is a softer science. I do have an engineering background.

But because of that, I was lucky to work with a lot of just amazing women which is very different than most of the rulemakings and technical work that we do at the Agency. I had the opportunity early on in my specialty to have mentors that we're just frankly the status quo of men within the Agency but people who had a social science background and other women and other colleagues. So I was very

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lucky to have that experience.

Going into the international realm, it seemed that this only continued my trajectory of being surrounded by women in that there was a new division being developed at the NEA where I was, as you described, for five years. And that division was headed by a women. And most of my colleagues were then women.

And then we went to working groups, and the chairs were women. And I just felt very blessed to have that experience. And it was comfortable to be a woman among women -- among other women, excuse me.

And also to be able to give my insights as someone who's moved through the world as a Black woman in these spaces that don't often have different levels of diversity being a minority group within any country, having that experience, being able to say during meetings. Well, we should also look at other countries and how they do it there and not be so into what the majority does. And I think that balance of not just gender equity but diversity and gender equity together definitely gave different perspectives in the work that I did at the NEA and

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all those different areas you named as well as giving me the experience of being heard and having other people understand the differences.

So I would say everyone should be open to not just experiencing different environments but open to how the environment can enrich you. And women should be encouraged to do that in STEM and in social sciences as well because they're both important. And working in the human aspects of nuclear safety, that's the human side.

And we all have the knowledge of operatives, the run the facilities. And that's also quite important. So I would leave my last word with encouraging everyone to know that they can have an input and an influence on policy development, even when it's down in the weeds and you don't think about it because you're not a leader. But on the totem pole at the bottom, that's what holds everyone else up. So every level counts and everybody can have input. Thank you.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you, Kamishan. Now let me turn to Andrea Ferkile. Dre currently serves as the Director of the Office of Nonproliferation Policy in the Office of Nonproliferation and Arms

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Control at the Department of Energy's National Nuclear Security Administration.

Before joining NNSA, Dre was a valued member of my staff in OIP. And I hated to lose Dre, but it was a win for the United States government. So with that, Dre, take it away.

MS. FERKILE: Thank you, Director Mamish. And yeah, it's a heartfelt warm welcome to come back and obviously be a part of this panel. I can't thank you enough for inviting me here to participate and especially amongst these remarkable women that are with me on this panel to talk about this topic. So thank you so much for the opportunity.

At least for me, as mentioned, my career kind of started at the NRC. I've had a long history coming from a science background, working through STEM, and trying to find that support through other communities, trying to help develop myself and push myself and experience as much as I can. And so when you're entering into a technical agency, sometimes those links are hard to find.

But I have commend NRC that I always felt that there's a community there. There was always

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leadership pushing through and being those kind of role models that like Laura mentioned that if we can empower that type of actions and those activities and trying to instill these type of diverse conversations and make that a norm within various different organizations, to me, that is, like, the roots in the ground that will continue to promote and push individuals into these types of opportunities and positions. So for myself, I have grown up in the NRC and it's been a cherished part of my life.

And when I got introduced moving from technical work into international policy work, I had those questions of where does the regulator fit at this table? How do we participate in the policy development? And to me, it gets right to the key of that diverse thing, that diverse discussion that you want to introduce and invite.

You want to create that open minded look at policymaking because there are the implementers on the back side that are fulfilling and taking the -- making those policies operatable. So I think that this a critical part of some of the diverse think and why pure demonstration and example of how that contributes to the whole process. And especially on

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an international platform, I feel very fortunate to have had opportunities to negotiate bilaterally, work on multi-lateral organizations throughout my career.

And not only the NRC but when I went on to the National Security Council and we were working on these policies and working directly with other countries, you can definitely tell that there's a much more openness there. And I really want to push our U.S. government, especially as civil servants and the leader in one of the most powerful countries on the planet. You want to have that leadership.

And so I'm thrilled and excited to continue to talk about kind of how diversity -- how we can use our platform to encourage and empower those that are coming up to carry on this legacy and make diversity in all of its different dimensions an essential part of policy in a globalizing world. I think the world is getting smaller. And I think this is a great opportunity to talk about those challenges of how do we integrate everything. And so just I've been thankful obviously for the opportunity to have leaders and role models that have helped promote and just encourage me to take those chances and break through the norms and come from an NRC regulatory

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background and take an NSC job position at the table to develop policy.

And that eventually projected me into where I am now. And again, working at cabinet level departments and agencies, I think it's just an opportune time for us to continue making this conversation a normal one and to not fear that and just to push ourselves out of our comfort zones. So thank you guys for having me speak today, and I look forward to hearing what my co-panelists have to say as well.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you, Dre. Finally, it's my pleasure to introduce Joyce Connery. Joyce is the Chair of the Defense Nuclear Facility Safety Board. She has been a very close colleague of the NRC and a huge supporter of the Agency for many years in her previous positions at the National Security Council and the Department of Energy. Joyce?

MS. CONNERY: Thank you, Nader. I think I'm the only one here who hasn't done a stint at the NRC. It seems like a hole in my resume that I'm going to have to fill someday. But until that time, thank you for inviting me to speak today and thanks for letting me be in what I call the anchor position

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of our relay team.

I'm excited to be here with my fellow panelists to discuss the long and winding road of women in international nuclear policymaking. But I don't want to repeat some of the remarks that are already made here. So I'm going to ask you to indulge me a little bit because I'm going to go a little bit off topic as usual and talk more about the women aspect versus international policymaking aspect.

But you can ask me anything during Q&A about the NSC, my role at the DNFSB. And just a shout out to those of you who organized this today. Virtual conferences are really tough to do.

We did a hearing this summer, and it was a nightmare. So I can't even imagine what you guys went through with this. And it's the second year, so God bless you for all the work that you're doing with that. And just like anything else, NRC does it with excellence as they do with all things.

So since NRC is hosting, I'm going to take a prerogative to give a shout out to all of the NRC -- amazing NRC women with whom I've had the privilege to work over the years. And it's not going to be a full exhaustive list. But I just want to

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give a flavor.

So in no particular order, just this is a shout out to Janice Dunn Lee, Margie Doane, Jennifer Holzman, Laura Mayrose, Christine Svinicki, Annie Caputo, Leah Smith, Nancy Fragamis, Alison Macfarlane, Patty Matt, Karen Henderson, Brooke Smith, and Heather Astwood and all of you who are on the panel today. I'm sure I've missed some. And the reason why I rattled off that list is a couple of reasons.

One, women seldom get recognized for the work they do. And in the spirit of the fact that yesterday was International Women's Day, I'm going to name check as many amazing women in this field as often as I can. And I'm not going to stop doing it just in the month of March.

What's missing from my list? Women of color. Why? Because we don't have enough representation in the industry. So I'm going to name another phenomenal woman and that would be Bonnie Jenkins and commend her for her outstanding work in founding Women of Color Advancing, Peace, Security, and Conflict Transformation, WCAPS. While not specific to our industry, women like Bonnie who now

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hold the rank of Undersecretary for Arms Control and International Security Affairs, they are blazing trails and lifting up others to follow in their footsteps.

Second reason why I name check was to point out a characteristic that women bring to the table. Not making generalizations about what women do better than men. Just pointing out something at which we excel.

We excel at building and sustaining relationships. Why is that important? Because those relationships make working in the international field better. Establishing and maintaining relationships lead to meaningful connections, information sharing, trust building, and better outcomes.

Some of the women I name checked, I haven't seen in person since 2015. But we still keep in touch, follow up, provide advice to each other, and maintain the connection. That might be why I'm on the panel today. Just saying. So as I noted on social media yesterday, again, and I'll paraphrase, behind every successful woman is a, technical term, crap ton load of other strong women holding her up,

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propelling her forward, name checking her. And that's been true of my career as well.

So I'm going to give you homework. I want you to name check some amazing women this week. Retweet them if you're on Twitter. Promote them if you're on LinkedIn, and remind the world of their contributions because they're not touting themselves loud enough and they should be.

I think the team wanted us to talk a little bit about our bios and our experience in the international policy realm as a woman. And I profess to being an accidental nuke. I did not attend a career in nuclear policy. And my first international experience was two and a half years in Turkmenistan.

Living abroad is a great way to test your assumptions about being an American, about yourself as a person, and as a woman. They actually had a running joke about there being three sexes, men, women, and American women because our experiences and approaches to the world were so different. And this goes to some of the stuff that Kamishan was saying about when you work in the international arena.

As a foreigner, as a woman living in another country, you're living in a fish bowl. They

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have expectations about who you are and how you should act based on their cultural experiences of women and their impressions of American women. So a little funny note, when I was in Turkmenistan which was in the '90s because I'm old, early '90s, they only had two TV shows from America: Twin Peaks and Santa Barbara.

So do you think that their expectations of American women were a little bit skewed? Probably. My first nuclear assignment was a couple years later overseas in Kazakhstan. There's a theme here. And I was working on nuclear nonproliferation issues for NSA and Department of Energy.

I met countless people from our industry coming into the country because what I would do is just jump on the logistics bus to go to the airport and meet any U.S. delegation that was coming into town and offer my services, not because it was my job, because I was a single woman in Kazakhstan and what else is there to do at 1:00 o'clock in the morning when planes to come in. And I was curious to learn everything that I could know. And what's interesting was that for every ten of us, there was one Kazakhstan working in the arena.

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Didn't matter if it was NRC, DOE, Commerce, DoD, they were all meeting the same, like, six Kazakhstanis. And the Kazakhstanis were very confused about this and didn't understand why we just didn't send one delegation to talk to them about all those things. This insight was actually really helpful later on because it inspired team USA later in my career when we got government and industry together to do trade missions on nuclear energy where the whole interagency was branded as one, including the NRC.

But since this panel is about women, a few observations about women's field, so to speak. One is it has its benefits. It's very difficult for high ranking officials to ignore you because they're polite, at least the Central Asian context and the Russian context.

I had no trouble walking up to ministers, chairmen, a couple of prime ministers because they didn't perceive me as a threat and because they were too polite to shoo me away. They were probably taken aback a little bit by my approaching them, but it worked. The disadvantage that some of the real conversations took place, at least in that part of

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the world in the banya which is the bathhouse which is where I didn't go. And so I missed out on some of those connections.

The other challenge to get real was physical security. Women tend to be more vulnerable in these settings, and I know I was. This is not unique being posted abroad, folks. It happens here too. And I just want you to stop and think about all those amazing women that I name checked plus all the ones that you could name check and think of all the times they were walking back to their cars, taking a taxi, at an event leaving along and trying to recall the conversations so they can go write that cable while in the back of their mind, what are they doing?

They're thinking about, are their keys in their hand facing the right way with one sticking out? Did they have safe passage to their car? Are they in a well lit place? Is there anyone suspicious in the vicinity? And is that cab driver's intent to take you to your destination while you keep one hand on the door?

People joke about the ability of women to multitask. Every woman in your life does it and sometimes it's a matter of survival. When I talk to

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women in international policy or my own staff regarding the challenges they would face, I would note the following.

It should go without saying that our leaders, our workforce, our employees are 360 degree people. What does that mean? They don't just exist within the context of a 40-hour work week.

They have other demands on their time and talent. As leaders in the field, it's incumbent upon us to remember this and remind our senior managers. They have families. They have children or parents that need taken care of. They need paid family leave.

They need sufficient paternity leave to bond with their children. It's necessary but not sufficient. We need to get rid of the stigma that still exists around working mothers in particular. Parents need to have the flexibility to take care their kids to the doctor without being penalized.

Relatedly, we need to stop the suffering Olympics. This is why some women do not go into certain jobs or shy away from that job at the NRC because it's a badge of honor to see who can stay in the office late. And they talk about it.

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This is the atmosphere at NRC at times, and it's an atmosphere that I've seen across U.S. government agencies. Yes, in a crisis, you stay if you need to. But if you have good cross trained teams, you shouldn't need to have that as a regular occurrence.

But we reward -- our structures reward just that. We consider hours worked above the required time as significantly exceeds expectations. I'm not sure that's the right metric.

Consider how many on your team have use or lose at the end of the year. And think about whether your culture is conducive to the workforce you want. We subtly leave women out of many conversations.

In Russia, it was the banya. But have noticed the favored activity of many of our conferences is a golf event. Opposite that golf event is a spouses program which is basically a rebranded wives program.

I'm not just saying that women aren't golfers. I golf occasionally, but I do it to be included in the conversation. And it hasn't really improved my golf game.

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I don't know about you. But when I was 18, I didn't do 18 -- when I was young, I didn't do 18 rounds with daddy at the golf club when I was in high school. And if your happy hours are at a cigar bar, chances are your female staff is going to be excluded.

Who ends up at the table matters. How loudly they speak matters. The table should reflect our country in which we live because we're doing the work on behalf of our nation when we're making nuclear policy, not the work of whatever ivy covered school you happen to come from.

Different perspectives shape and form and sharpen our policymaking. But it isn't enough people in the room when it happens? That room has to be a welcoming place for those people to not only get into the room but to keep them there.

It's human nature not to stay where we're not welcome. So appreciate the chance to be a little provocative. So thank you, and I look forward to questions.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you, Joyce. And thank you, everyone, for getting us started with such thought provoking introductions and ideas. And

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there's a lot to talk about already.

Now let me pose a question to each of you, each of our panelists, to get us started. And I'm sure we'll get a number of other questions from the audience. My first question is, why is it important -- and some of you already kind of addressed it and others may not have.

Why is it important to have diverse voices when discussing or negotiating international policy? Relatedly, how has international engagement broaden or change your definition of diversity or raise new issues in that regard? And I'm going to start with Margie and go in that order.

MS. DOANE: Okay. Thanks, Nader. So yeah, so I did try to talk about diversity. But first of all, I'm going to say Joyce Connery. That's my name check. So that was awesome, so enthusiastic. I loved it.

So we're talking about just why diversity is so important, right? Did I get the whole question because it was long. Is that most of it?

MR. MAMISH: Yes, yes.

MS. DOANE: Okay. So right. So I think what you heard from a number of the speakers is just

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how the conversation changes when you get a new perspective. I'm in a multi-national organization now. Kamishan was talking about this as well because she came from the NEA. And it's incredible because when we talk about diversity, it's diversity and diversity and diversity.

It's so many different cultures, and then within certain regions, different cultures. And so it's rich in perspectives. And what I have found is in my -- and I don't want to exclude men because there are men that are very good at this as well.

But women are very good at relationship building. Like Joyce was saying, what that means is they're very good at bringing people to the table. They often are noticing who isn't talking or how to get things started and showing sort of a more intuitive side to a debate from the perspective of seeing who can contribute and has contributed or whose voice isn't loud enough and helping it be louder.

The problem is like Joyce said sometimes women are at the table, but they're not the loudest. But I think the more I think women get in positions to be influential but also that you put yourself at

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the table to be influential, I think that the debate will be enriched. So I think a lot has been said here, Nader, but I'm going to leave it at that so you can give everybody else a chance to say a few words.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Margie. I'm going to go to Laura.

MS. DUDES: -- Nader, and I got to say you're going to just get name checked by everyone, Joyce, because that was really inspirational. And you just wove a tapestry story. And really I think all of us are just resonating with all of the subtleties that you just shared because they are things that we deal with every day. So I just really thank you for that, for creating and putting that out front.

So to really answer the importance of diversity. So I'm going to just take it. And I think the second part of your question, Nader, was impacts on us, right? And I mean, I think my -- I have gotten, I've learned so much more. I think my decision making is richer from being in an international setting.

I think I always just look now to people from -- I've worked with folks from many different

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countries. And I will say when I first went into the international arena, I had the American woman hat on, Joyce. And it was -- and I had a certain perspective about how things should be done in nuclear safety.

And I quickly learned from my colleagues around the world, right? All their views, there's more than one way to get at safety. I mean, if you look at regulators around the world, their programs sometimes look very different than ours.

And yet, they have the same reasonable assurance of adequate protection and safety. And so having that dialogue with an international group really enriched me as a person. It made me a better regulator. It made me a better leader.

And I will just say having that voice at the table is a great thing. But then also we should all be advocates, right? Whenever you're in a meeting, right, it's not enough to come to the women's panel but make that effort. Speak up.

If you have the opportunity, make sure you're going around the table. You're asking people what they think because that will make the conversation and the work so much richer. Thank you.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Laura. Let's go to

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Kamishan. Kamishan, I'm sure when you went to NEA, you were one person. And you came back to the NRC hopefully a different person in terms of your views on diversity. And you touched a little bit on that in your introduction. Can you give us a little bit more about how that experience changed your definition of diversity.

MS. MARTIN: Well, I hate to repeat, but it is paramount that when you have these international experiences that you do wear the hat of an American, even when you don't feel so American. So when you move throughout the world, that is the first thing that people notice about you is that you're an American, especially if you're not in a place where people don't speak English. But having the background of being part of a minority population here in the States, it gave me the insights to speak up for other minority populations, particularly in my work in stakeholder engagement because it was a goal to seek out a lot of the immigrant populations in the various countries when they're talking about rad waste management.

So I had the perspective of saying this may be whatever everyone is saying in this room among

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these people who have this level of education in this particular area or just experience. But it gave me a perspective of what it's like to be -- I wasn't an immigrant. I was an ex-pat.

But it gave me a window into what it's like to be an immigrant in some of these countries where it's very important to engage that community when discussing what decisions will be made and how they should be engaged and how they should be considered. So that's a perspective that I didn't have so much of before, living overseas and working in that type of environment. But it also gave me a perspective on all the different cultures that exist and how they should all be respected and considered when having these conversations, be it throughout the entire life cycle of nuclear.

So I focused a little bit more on waste management. But even in the beginning in the development stages, some things have to be considered and who you choose to populate from academia on into operation. All of that has to be considered.

So I think I had the background of understanding diversity on a personal level before going there. But that definitely broadened my

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perspectives in seeing what kind of national cultures and pocket cultures that I was exposed to in these discussions. So I hope that answered the question, but that was just my experience with what diversity can do and how it contributes and enriches all the conversations when you have different people and different experience and different levels involved in the conversations.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you. I'm going to go to Dre.

MS. FERKILE: Thank you, Nader. And as my co-panelists eloquently explained and to your point, Joyce, I take on the challenge. Name tag challenge accepted. So I'm going to continue it on. We're starting something new. So it'll be across all of social media hopefully within the next couple of hours. So fantastic.

To answer this question, Nader, I mean, to me some of the things that I try to focus on or what I've learned through this process is how do you embrace diversity. Like, how do you become open to that? So we're presented in our positions as a federal employee, either representing the United States or you're in these multi-lateral board

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meetings or meeting bilaterally, working with regulators or other international governments.

What does that mean? Like, how do you actually do that? And so, for me, I try to hone in on that and identify some things that I thought could be characteristics to portray and act in such just being open minded, to understand what is diversity, right? What is different about us?

So there's that saying that says, if you walk a mile in someone else's shoes, you'll have an understanding. So I really try to listen more than try to absorb and take on and learn from others and their experiences because even though it seems like those human parts of interacting with another person wouldn't come to play in these types of dynamic situations where you're negotiating agreements or working with other international counterparts. I think that's a critical element that's needed.

You have to seek to embrace that difference and to understand how to embrace it. Those characteristics to me is critical in trying to kind of find a ground because to me that's the only way they're going to strengthen the international policy that your objective is, right? And so to

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understand those differences to me is key number one.

So I think it's a challenge to everybody, as Joyce mentioned, challenging people. But I think that's a part of it is how -- yes, we should be diverse. But what does that actually mean? Like, how do you do that? And embracing that to me is asking those questions, being inquisitive, being open, listening, understanding. That to me is something that I personally think is an actionable characteristic that could help promote this across in the longer term.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks. Thanks, Dre. Over to you, Joyce.

MS. CONNERY: I love the answers that everybody has given. And I think when you think about your international delegation, when you come over to the U.S. delegation, think about the people that you're with. And when somebody says, where are you from, when you're overseas, you say you're from the United States.

When you're in D.C., you say, I'm from Boston or I'm from Atlanta, right? So even understanding your own identity is one way to kind of look at the identity of others. And I love what

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Kamishan said about coming as a minority and then recognizing the minority.

Who's representing the other countries? What minorities aren't at their table that we're missing in the conversation and embracing that. It comes down to what Dre was talking about the Atticus Finch test, walks a mile in his shoes. It comes down to empathy and understand it.

But I think for a long time -- I'm a social scientist. And for a long time, we talked about cultural competence. And I think we're moving away from that because you can't be culturally competent right?

So we have to come at it with cultural humility is how I would look at it. And that's how we need to look at diversity to say, like, I don't know the cultural ins and outs of the countries that I'm working with. So all I can do is look at the perspective.

And why you need it, it is because it sharpens your pencils. I makes you -- gives you perspectives you wouldn't have. It avoids group think which everybody wants to avoid. But I think it's also that if you are in a diverse delegation,

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for instance, you might not pick up on the subtleties that's happening in another culture.

I'll give a couple of quick examples. Like, so one, in Russia, there's an expression that says that the man may be the head of the household, but the woman is the neck that turns the head, which I think is a fantastic statement. It doesn't have to be about men and women.

But there's always -- it doesn't have to be the person at the table who's leading the delegation. It's the guy behind or the woman behind that's giving them all the information. And so once you realize that, you can make breakthroughs by having that side conversation because you noticed that, right? So you have to be -- as Margie said, you have to be observant. And you have to study human.

And the second one that I'll give was when I was in Kazakhstan and we were working on decommissioning the BM-350 reactor, I was kind of -- I was working there with the Kazakhs, the Russians, and the folks from Idaho National Lab because they had a fast breeder reactor, right? So they were all working together. And what I discovered was the

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language they had in common was technical, right?

They could speak to each other -- they couldn't speak to each other, like, in the same word language. But as soon as you brought out a blueprint, they were all speaking the same language. And that was their cultural similarity.

So you have to find the common ground and then start to work from there. So what I interpreted was not English to Russian. I interpreted technical speak to policy speak so that they can get the money do what it is that they needed to do that they agreed on from a technical standpoint.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you, Joyce. It looks like we have a number of terrific questions here. The first one is for Kamishan and Laura. What are your suggestions on how to switch from a technical/engineering career into a policymaking career? Kamishan, do you want to start us off?

MS. MARTIN: Sure. Laura had unmuted herself, so I was letting her go. Well, I would say that you have the choice to switch from a technical engineering degree -- or career into policymaking. Or you can take a technical track.

I think that if you go into a more of a

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leadership role and making the decisions on exactly what the policy would be, then maybe that path would involve some different professional development. But for me, I was always a technical specialist. And so for my contribution to policy development is giving the technical aspects and the technical expertise and the technical perspectives.

So to piggyback off of the saying of the neck that moves the head, you have these policymakers who may not be steeped in the technical and engineering day-to-day experiences. But they will always need someone with a technical expertise who understands all the political aspects and the nuances that go into policy development as well as having the technical background. So I would say you may -- if you want to take the path of being strictly in policy development, you may need to take a path of leadership and looking at different type of developments.

But there's also the opportunity as a technical specialist who have that common language of technical or nuclear science and development, all the working groups that I've observed and helped to facilitate while I was at the NEA. All the people from all the various countries that were at the table,

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that was their common language.

These were technical experts. And they were giving and gaining insights from other technical experts from different countries. So I think that you have an option to switch or to be more of a technical advisor and be on the cutting edge of new developments.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you, Kamishan. So now Laura?

MS. DUDES: I think that was a great answer and I want to get to some other questions. I want to kind of just add a little spin to it. And one of things I agree is you always have a choice, right?

You can find your career path and hopefully it's a zig zag because it's a lot more exciting if you're moving around a little bit. But I would say that you are -- I think it was a natural transition for me that I spent the early part of my career honing my technical capability, my understanding of nuclear power plants and all of the issues and learning. And so it was very natural then.

I think you're a better policymaker if

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you actually can bring that understanding of the technology forward. And I think that's true domestically, and I think in the international area. And I know a lot of my colleagues that I've worked with on various working groups are incredibly technical. And then they evolve into being policymakers and leaders. And I just think it's a richer conversation and a richer decision when you have kind of knowledge of the topic you're making policy on. Thank you.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Laura. The next question we have is for Margie. Margie, you were an inspiration to women across the NRC. How had your transition to the IEA impacted your ability to influence your ability to promote women across the international community?

MS. DOANE: Well, okay. Thanks for that question and for the nice compliment. Thank you, everybody. I think I have to thank so many women in my life. So maybe of whom Joyce -- Joyce and many of the other women that she talked about for helping me. And so I had such incredible role models.

I think many of you know I kind of said to everybody when we were talking about what we talked

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about here today, I said, I'm not going to talk about myself because everybody had heard my career journey. I've been at so many of these. I didn't want to bore you guys.

But I will say that I switched offices a lot at the NRC. I went from opinion writing as a lawyer for many years, then I went up to a commission office, then I went down to international programs. I didn't have any international background.

I'd taken courses in college, but I didn't have an international background at the NRC. I got that through working in the Commissioner's office. And then I sort of learned on the job -- thank you to everyone in OIP that taught me -- and then from there to the general counsel's office.

And then I jumped over again to the EDO's office. And what I'm trying to illustrate for you is that you touch so many people's lives by taking on those opportunities that your mentors push you into. And I'll say push because there are a lot of those jobs, a lot of those switches I wasn't ready for.

But really I embrace them. And I was so enriched by doing it. And everywhere along the way, getting to how -- to really the ability to promote

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women and then in the international communities.

All along the way building good relationships. So when you go up to that next job, you can pull those people up with you or you can bring them into projects and things like that. So building really good relationships all the way and really having a commitment to bring women to the table.

And in the international community -- and I remember saying this a lot at OIP -- I'm sorry, at NRC when I was there that when you struggle, when times are very difficult at your agency, we are going through change if you remember. It's well understood that minority and disadvantaged communities who already aren't at the table have a difficult time, so women or any -- and sometimes it can be a personal perspective that it's hard to be at the table.

But when you go through then in more difficult time, you actually have more of an impact on those communities. So I was so fortunate to be at the NRC when we were going through this big change because I really -- that was where I really struggled is to make sure that we included everyone. And this has helped me so much in my job.

I'm using this all the time now, and we

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have a lot of work to do. Deechy Grossy maybe you've seen has really branched out into a number of different areas. He's now into solving issues with plastic, Raise Hope for Cancer, I can't tell you. A lot of different things that the Agency is doing.

And so we're changing how we are managing all this because I'm on the management side. And again, this is the struggle because it's a lot of work to take on these new issues. I'm making sure that we are promoting women, that we are promoting diverse groups that anyone that's in a group that is disadvantaged that we're reaching everyone.

We're making sure that we're hearing all voices because as we always say at the NRC, never know whose got the right answer. And so I think for my part, I tried to mentor. And I promise you. I think I get as much out of these mentoring relationships as my mentees get. So that was long. I should stop now. But those are just a few things that I've been working on. So back to Nader.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Margie. I think your comment about mentoring certainly I'm sure resonates with a lot of us who mentor others. It's always a win-win for both the mentor and the mentee.

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So that's for that.

The next question I have is for Dre. So Dre, in your position at DOE, how do you help create an environment of inclusiveness and empowerment? How are you extending your support to junior staff including staff that work for you?

MS. FERKILE: I think it does kind of bode well and build off of what Margie was mentioning, especially on the mentor side. And the second part of the question of how do you do that. I mean, a lot of times I think we get too stuck in our ways and think that into our schedule and into those meetings and providing stuff for our leadership and our managers.

But finding that time to either seek mentorships or be a mentor to others is so critical. I think it's just, again, building on those relationships and learning something different about different parts of the organizations or if you seek mentorship outside of your organization, learning ways that other practices are operated and how things are kind of done. I mean, I know it's a big part of it of trying to encourage folks to prioritize that, to make time for that.

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Most people, I think at for myself coming up the ranks when I was younger, I would almost be nervous to ask. Oh, that senior leader is too busy to take time or meet with me. But that's not the case.

Many, many senior leaders want to share their experiences. So I encourage you to reach out and find those opportunities and ask them if they have time. Ten minute coffee, I think you just get so much and on both side.

I think the truth is that it's not just the mentoree that learns a lot. I think the mentor also can gain quite a bit just from having that discussion and dialogue of what they're experiencing. So I think mentorships are extremely valuable. For me, that has probably been the number one thing.

I haven't gone through the ranks. Where I am now was not a selected path. I definitely was the ping pong version of bouncing back and forth. Through different experiences.

And I wouldn't have taken some of those opportunities if I didn't have mentors that were pushing me out of my comfort zone. So you need that. You need that in your career as much as you do in

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your general life.

And so I think that's a big component of trying to get out of our normal practices and just make that a priority. Find that time to push yourself into seeking some sort of discussion with others. I mean, as far as the inclusivity and empowerment, I mean, I think those are extremely vital to a successful organization.

And the current position I have now, I think it gets down to the basic human being nature. We want to respect and value -- I think humans in general want to be respected and valued for their information uniqueness. And they want to be known that they add value and that they matter.

And I think this kind of gets weaved in through your career and your work path. And so I believe that if you create these relationships with coworkers, you can do that through trusting each other. And it's both the need to trust and to be trusted. I think those are critical aspects of it.

And when those needs are met, I believe that you can develop a culture of empowered people across the board. I try to think about this often to be honest because I do think at least in my current

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organization there's a lot of siloed discussions going on. And so to create, again, an environment where you're bringing different viewpoints to the table, allowing people to share their uniqueness.

And I think that's critical to meet the mission of the organization wherever you're working. And so in order to how do you do that, to me, it gets back to those elements that we've kind of heard throughout the panel, whether it's empathy or respect for others. The nurturing relationships with coworkers, you have to build that trust with the group that you work with.

That, to me, is creating that environment. And it allows and enables kind of bringing to the table again those varied abilities and experiences. And through that, I think it organically generates new ideas and approaches for the work that you're doing, through the team dynamics.

And so to me, it's really about human element. Talk to the people that you work with. Get to know them. I think that's such a critical part of what we do. Plus we spend a lot of time with each other in our lives.

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And nowadays, I do feel that we work -- we spend more time at work than we do with our loved ones at home. So spend time with them and develop those relationships. And to me, that's how you'll instill empowerment in those areas, finding those leadership connections to help move forward, whether it's goals and objectives in the organization or your own personal career development. So that's one of the ways I've been trying to approach that.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Dre. Joyce, you covered a lot of ground in your opening remarks, but a credit to the audience who have a very good question for you. So what is your perspective on how to help women get noticed while working remotely?

We are in a unique environment. And so they don't have daily in-person access to leadership. How do they get noticed. How do they outshine others in their office?

MS. CONNERY: Okay. So I'm just going to -- I'm not picking on you. But that framed in a very male-centered way. How do you outshine others? We don't think that way. We shouldn't be thinking that way, right?

How do I get noticed from my work,

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because it's not a pie where if I get noticed, somebody else doesn't get noticed. So I'm just going to start with the premise of let's change how we frame the question. Framing is important.

Secondly, I would say, look, this environment is very, very difficult for a number of reasons. I struggle with this because I see the folks that naturally don't want to engage disengage when they're in a virtual environment. I see it being a struggle for folks not just about whether or not they get noticed but whether or not they get heard because you can actually self-select by not teaming with somebody, right, or if you're picking your own teams or those who aren't necessarily inclined.

And so this is really a management and leadership challenge to be able to reach out to each one of those individuals and make sure that they are developing the way they want to develop in their particular career field. And I believe that as we move from completely virtual to hybrid to having more flexibility, I think we have to change expectations too. And we as managers and leaders have to recognize that it's not whoever puts all the hours in the office that is necessarily doing the work.

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Let the work stand for itself and not about who has the face time. And to the extent that you're a good manager or a good leader, you're paying attention to what the dynamics are on the screen the same way you should be paying attention to how they are in the room. And so the camera is on, camera is off thing is also very touchy too because people's home environments are different.

And you don't necessarily have the right to be in their home even if they're in a telework status to be able to see what's going on, right? So there are a lot of challenges with that, that I would say. But let's reframe the question it's not about a competition, about how gets more notice than others. It's about how you as an individual move along the work path and the career path that you want.

And to Dre's point, have people challenge you to say, I think you're too stuck in your comfort zone and you need to move on to the next level. It's not above did I get all five? It should be about, am I making the contribution that I want to make to the organization and does the organization value it? Because as soon as we stop valuing what it is that they're doing, they're going to stop contributing.

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MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Joyce. The next question is for all of you. So how do you combat the perception that women have more opportunities because they are a diversity hire rather than being valued as a skilled person? Let me start with you, Joyce.

MS. CONNERY: Okay. I feel like I'm set up for that. So I actually (inaudible) because I didn't want this to fall off and I want to hear everybody's answers to this because I think this is a challenge. People who say, oh, you're in that position because you're a diversity hire, it says more about them than it says about you, right?

That is their insecurity coming to the forefront. But the more of us there are, the less often they get to say that. I've heard it a lot in my career where people, oh, well, they put her in that position because they wanted a woman, right?

There's plenty of well educated, smart women with qualities who can fill any of these jobs. And I understand that any woman could take my job. I don't think any man could. But there are a lot of women who could take my job.

So I just think we have to think about it in those terms when they come at us with that. And

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I think we have to debunk that myth. The difference is that a man is automatically assumed qualified without having to prove his qualifications and a woman isn't necessarily.

And I've experienced that even in my own organization. If I'm standing there with a man, the man will get talked to versus me. And they have to nudge them and say, oh, no, she's the Chairman. You have to talk to her.

Because there is a mental assumption that the man is automatically qualified and the woman has to prove her qualifications. And that is the difficult myth that we have to debunk. And I want to hear everybody else.

MR. MAMISH: Okay. I am going to go to Laura.

MS. DUDES: I could not have said that better. I mean, and I think I've been experiencing that assumption since I was in college. I didn't even get grades because I studied. I got them because I was a female which I never understood why that was.

But I used a similar phrase that Joyce did. And I'm probably a little bit more blunt about

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it, you said about qualified. I felt like -- and in particular as I started to get into leadership positions. She's exactly right.

You can walk into a room. Nobody says anything. There's actually social experiments where you take a man and a woman into a large crowd and they describe their backgrounds. And the crowd picks who has what job.

And it's, like, a high statistic that says most of the audience says that he is the senior person, he is the supervisor. And I always used to say to my folks that I was mentoring that men are assumed brilliant, right? And women are assumed stupid until proven smart whereas men are assumed smart until prove student. And maybe those aren't the best words. I like qualified better. So I'm going to up my language.

But I think you're dead on. I think we have to -- and the last thing I would say is I really agree. And people have asked me this question recently, right, some of the women I've mentored and how do we deal with that. And I keep telling me, well, it is their problem, right? Anybody in this day and age who's going to say that, it's probably an

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issue that they have.

But I think there's more to it. We have to be advocates. If you see something, say something. And we need everyone to be advocates, right, all across the board. Men and women to be advocates to understand. But that's just not the case and that's just no longer an acceptable thing to say for a behavior to exhibit.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Laura. I'm going to go to Kamishan next.

MS. MARTIN: There's not a whole lot to add with the adage that is truly their problem. And I have encountered people who may have had the notion that I was a diversity hire because I am a Black woman. And they may feel like, well, you check two boxes.

So you're taking this opportunity from someone else that's qualified, without ever considering that I am qualified. Otherwise, I would not be here. So I don't know that I would say I combat that perception. I just do my job.

I live up to my qualifications, and I respect everyone. And when I do encounter other men who do not hold this particular antiquated notion, I

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implore them to speak out. Because what I've learned is what happens when you try to overcompensate or combat, I'm going to show you, that doesn't always go over so well and it's not really good for you.

So when you find an ally, you say, hey, you be the mouthpiece. I'm doing my part by doing my job and being qualified and providing excellence. So you have to be an ally and to your fellow gender mates. And that's my personal approach because it is their problem. And we can't solve other people's problems in that manner in the workplace.

MR. MAMISH: Well said, Kamishan. Let's go to Dre.

MS. FERKILE: Sure, absolutely. Obviously, the panelists have brought up really great points on this. I mean, think that you're going to have critics regardless. Like, they're going to have those narratives and pick us apart, in general, us as in people in general.

Every position, it's rare. I can't imagine anyone that walked this earth does not have that type of judgment or filter put on you. So when we're talking about women in a career position, it's something that I think my co-panelists also

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highlighted on.

But just to me, keep your head down and keep pushing. Like, you have to have that confidence and know in yourself that you got that job because you deserved it. For whatever, like, you have the education. You are a hard worker. You've demonstrated you're disciplined. You're persistent.

Whatever it is that got you to that point. You hold on to that and that is your rock internally. And then when people have those comments, just keep doing what you're doing and it will speak for itself. And I truly believe that. I really do believe that.

I just, yeah, I think it's -- you always have people that will have comments. And does it take a culture shift? Yes. Are we there yet? No. Definitely as others have alluded to more eloquently than I can right now.

But yeah, there's absolutely people out there that still approach individuals differently. And until that day and age where this isn't a problem anymore, we have to keep our heads down and keep pushing forward and be that example. Be that person that you want to be, that you've seen and kind of

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aspire to be. Fill those shoes and do it in your own way. But that unique voice and just have confidence in it and find that rock within yourself.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Dre. And last but not least, Margie.

MS. DOANE: Oh, thanks, Nader. So that is -- it's a question that it gets my blood boiling. So I don't think you can progress through an organization and not have people think that.

And so I am competitive by nature. So I would encourage anyone who feels like they're in this position to use it to motivate you because you have the skills, you have the knowledge, or you can acquire it. Use mentors.

But the more you promote yourself and the better you do in that job, that will self -- it will be self-fulfilling for you. You can't -- I mean, it's just noise on the outside. So you just have to, for yourself, be the person that deserved that job that you know you are and that you can be. So that's the first thing. That's how you combat it.

And then the other thing is you make sure that when people are saying that about other women that you speak up. Like, be an advocate. Never

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allow that to go unchecked because I will tell you. I was in international programs back in the day in the 2005 to 2010 at this time.

And I had a very good friend who was in SBCR, not your current head of SBCR. But she was in small business and civil rights. And she came to me and she said, hey, we did a diversity review on the office for you and everything went well. Really good marks.

But there's one issue. And now is everybody ready? You have too many women in your management level. And I said, okay. I'm sorry about this for everybody who were involved in this.

But at the top in the EDO's office there were no women. And there had not been women for years. There had been one woman who had come in and then come out. And so there were all men.

And so I said, did you have the same conversation with the -- now here I'm just, like, little lowly new SES. Did you have this exact same conversation with the Executive Director of Operations because his office is all men. And so she started laughing and we were talking about it.

And I said these women earned this job.

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They were qualified. And this ups the statistic. So be an ally for other women, and you give everything you have into that job. You're going to shine because you did deserve it. Tell yourself you deserved it.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Margie. So I think what I heard from the panel here on this particular question which was an excellent question is ignore the noise. Let your work do the talking. And let these perceptions be your motivation. And that is really the formula to get to the right place.

I think we have about ten minutes left. So I've got one last question for all of you. But I want to thank everyone for your incredibly interesting discussion. I wish we had a whole day to continue talking.

There was a lot of nuggets that I heard today and I'm sure our audience heard. But unfortunately, we need to wrap this up in the next few minutes. So before we do that, I would like to ask each of our panelists if there is one parting or one final message you want your audience to take away from today's discussion, what would that be?

I'm going to go in opposite order this

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time, starting with Joyce. And so I'd like to ask each of you to give us a minute or two maximum on that question. So with that, Joyce?

MS. CONNERY: You know I can't clear my throat in a minute, right? Just kidding. So first of all, message to take home. I gave you one homework assignment.

The second homework assignment, be an ally. Be an ally. Call it out when you see it. Applaud the women around you. Make sure that you're making some noise.

The second thing I will say is I love speaking on these panels. I love speaking about women. Sometimes, though, we would actually just like to speak about the stuff that we do because we're all competent professionals.

So if you want to have an entire panel of women talking about human factors about nuclear safety, we're all available. And we can talk about that as much as we can talk about being women. It's not about our double X chromosomes. It's about the qualifications we bring to the table. Thanks for having me.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you, Joyce. Dre?

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MS. FERKILE: It's a hard one to follow, but I'll do my best for me. It's advocacy. Just be your own advocate. I think that is something to take with you is just advocate for yourself. Advocate for others that you see are obviously stepping forward in the right light and in a pattern that you would also want to represent for yourself.

By advocating, I mean get out there. Talk to people. Talk to your senior leaders. If you're interested in something, ask them, talk to them. I think that's the biggest thing that I could try to leave everybody with. Thanks.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Dre. Kamishan?

MS. MARTIN: I would say whatever your interests are, let them be known. And as much as you are an advocate for other women, be an advocate for yourself. Let people know if you're interested in doing international policy work, if you're interested in doing any international work.

If you just want to change offices and do something different, let that be known. Build those relationships so that people know you and your voice is heard. So that way, when an opportunity comes around, people will think of you and people will

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contact you because that's what happened to me.

If I didn't make it known, if I didn't participate in international meetings and say hey, this is something that I'm interested in, people would not have known that, oh, she's willing to live overseas in a country where she doesn't speak the language. So whether that was wise or not, I would say be an advocate for yourself. And don't let being the only woman in the room, even if that happens frequently, don't let that stop you from speaking out on behalf of yourself and let your interests be known.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you, Kamishan.
Laura?

MS. DUDES: So that's really great because I'm agreeing with all of this and it's what we're going through. So I'll actually go back to two things for you. My challenge in my opening remarks to all the men who are listening, become a mentor. Become an advocate. Mentor. Bring people with you, right?

And I guess it's for the entire audience. Let's bring all people into our international activities and give them the exposure and include everyone in that. So mentor your folks and give them

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the opportunity.

And then I think the other thing that I would just leave for some folks in the audience, we sometimes -- and you hear it in some of these questions. And I see it. I've seen it in my career.

We self-select out. We have these things that we're -- well, maybe I'm not going to go for that or try for that. Take your seat at the table, right? You deserve it. You earn it. I would encourage you to just pull out your own chair and have a seat. Thanks.

MR. MAMISH: Thank you, Laura. And Margie?

MS. DOANE: Okay. So first of all, I'm going to say don't just seek out women mentors. Seek out men as well. And Nader, you are a great example in this regard. And thank you so much for being so respectful on this panel and taking all this flack that we've given you. You are awesome and I'm so appreciative.

Back to my first words, join the debate. The world needs women in order to make important changes. And we're at a very pivotal time in the world as you know.

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And we really need everyone who can contribute to contribute. I know there are amazing women on this call. And I can only imagine if all of you just sort of joined the debate and really help push these issues forward, what difference that would make.

So be motivated. Seek out ways to do it. And get good mentors for sure. And thank you so much. I miss all of you tremendously.

MR. MAMISH: Thanks, Margie. Thank you all again for your terrific thoughts and wisdom. I know that you've given us and you've given the audience a lot to think about and reflect on. At this point, I'm going to turn things to Molly Keefe-Forsyth from the Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee. Molly?

MS. KEEFE-FORSYTH: Thank you, Nader. So good afternoon, everyone. My name is Molly Keefe-Forsyth, and I currently serve as the Vice Chair for the Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee.

I'd like to thank everyone in attendance for attending our panel session today and especially thank you to the outstanding women on the panel for sharing their experiences and wisdom with us. I'd

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also like to add my own little quote that inspired me this week during International Women's Day. I posted on my Facebook feed yesterday.

It says, feminism isn't about making women stronger. Women are already strong. It's about changing the way the world perceived that strength. So that really resonated with me this week. All right. Let me get back to where my notes were.

All right. So it is my honor to announce this year's recipient for the Equal Employment Opportunity award. This year, the Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee has selected our secretary actually, Justin Vazquez.

Justin hit the ground running when he joined FWPAC as a regional representative in 2018. Shortly after joining, he agreed to co-lead FWPAC's professional development subcommittee. And he was eventually selected for his current role as the FWPAC secretary where he has continued to serve as a strong and effective leader within the committee.

Justin has spearheaded and led the coordination of several important FWPAC events over the past few years, including a series of

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professional development workshops in 2019, an agencywide flash mentoring session in 2020, and numerous panel discussions on diversity and inclusion and professional development topics. On top of all of this, he's also fulfilled his duties as secretary diligently. And he is an overall active contributor to the FWPAC discussions and activities and is definitely an advocate for women at the NRC.

It is clear that Justin has a passion about FWPAC's mission to empower women to establish and achieve their career goals. And we are thrilled to recognize his contributions with this award. So on behalf of the NRC Federal Women's Program Advisory Committee, to my friend and colleague, Justin Vazquez, congratulations.

MR. VAZQUEZ: Thank you, Molly. And thank you to FWPAC. I have really been quite privileged to work as an ally with such a strong and dedicated group of women at the NRC. And it's truly an honor receive this award.

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to serve our cause over the past few years. And in response to Laura's call during the panel, I'll say that I am proud to be an ally and

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advocate. And I'm looking forward to continuing our work together in the years to come.

MS. KEEFE-FORSYTH: All right. Thanks again, everyone, for attending today. Take care. Be safe. Thank you.

(Whereupon, the above-entitled matter went off the record.)