

Foreword

from the Technical Director



The year 2020 has been a complicated and unexpected one for all of us, with the global sanitary crisis upsetting our personal lives, our relationships with the world, and our way of working and communicating.

The Generation IV International Forum (GIF) has of course been deeply affected by this situation, especially when an important part of its organization is based on expert exchanges, promoting direct contact and face-to-face meetings.

We have had to invent new methods of working, therefore, promoting digital tools, and in general showing that we can adapt to diverse situations thanks to our collective agility.

In this context, it has not been easy to stay aligned with the GIF perspectives that were presented in the 2019 Programme Plan of the Technical Director. Together, we managed together to avoid any breaks in the GIF workflow among experts, and to pursue our fundamental goal of repositioning GIF in the new context of a deregulated energy market and a decarbonized, future society.

Together, we have experienced some great achievements, despite the COVID-19 situation that has hit all countries hard, and I would like to highlight some of these achievements below:

- We have made a first step towards the nuclear private sector and start-ups by organizing a very successful “workshop on Advanced Manufacturing and Research Infrastructure”. The workshop was held in February 2020, and it was close to the last live event for GIF, before the general lockdown in many countries around the world. The workshop was a significant milestone because: 1) it will be the first in a long series of planned events for the coming years (see Chapter 2 of this report); and 2) it was during this workshop that we started the experience of a hybrid conference (i.e. a face-to-face meeting and an online video link for our Chinese colleagues). I am certain that the future transition towards normal, global working and travelling conditions will again allow us to make use of such hybrid events.
- We have pursued our studies on all systems, and in all working groups and task forces. Some of our work has reached a successful conclusion (e.g. the R&D Infrastructure Task Force, sodium-cooled fast reactor safety design criteria), while significant milestones have been achieved in others (e.g. the White Paper on Flexibility, the White Paper on Proliferation Resistance and Physical Protection for some systems, and the synthesis review of fuel qualification for all six systems).
- We have paved the way for the near future action towards creating a GIF brainstorming group on the non-electrical application of nuclear heat, producing recommendations to increase the link between GIF and the SMR sector, and proposing cross-cutting actions between molten salt reactor and safety experts.

In this context, we have even found opportunities to completely refresh GIF branding with a new logo, a completely redesigned GIF website and a new communications approach. We have also confirmed our unique position in education and training, with our webinars seeing a very significant increase in participation levels.

I am thus very grateful for all of the efforts that have been undertaken to synthesize the chapters that follow in this GIF 2020 Annual Report because the context was particularly unfavourable. We have nonetheless found the resources to keep our motivation, willingness and enthusiasm.

Gilles RODRIGUEZ
GIF Technical Director